

DIAL

JUNE 1928

Landscape <i>Oil</i>	<i>André Derain</i>	
Manorbier	<i>Robert Hillyer</i>	451
Five Prose Sketches	<i>William Carlos Williams</i>	456
Two Linoleum Cuts	<i>Lowell Houser</i>	
The Men	<i>William Carlos Williams</i>	463
Maxim Gorki	<i>Alexander Kaun</i>	464
Yet Water Runs Again	<i>Edward Sapir</i>	468
The Bulls	<i>Azorín</i>	469
Prelude	<i>Conrad Aiken</i>	472
Alastor	<i>Malcolm Cowley</i>	475
Negro Head <i>Wood</i>	<i>Pabouin</i>	
The Creek	<i>Sterling North</i>	479
Ode	<i>Charles Norman</i>	482
Promenade <i>Pen and Ink</i>	<i>Adolf Dehn</i>	
The Poetry of Racine	<i>Benedetto Croce</i>	483
Relics	<i>Lu Yu</i>	488
Lights	<i>Howard Hayes</i>	489
The Hermit Crab	<i>Robert Hyde</i>	492
Lithograph and Oil Painting	<i>Paul Gauguin</i>	
Basque Land	<i>Stefaan Couwenberg</i>	493
At Glenan Cross	<i>L. A. G. Strong</i>	497
The End of the World	<i>Elizabeth Coatsworth</i>	499
Song of the Trees	<i>Yvor Winters</i>	504
Paris Letter	<i>Paul Morand</i>	505
Book Reviews:		
"The Possessed Sea-Captain"	<i>Padraic Colum</i>	511
Biological Pantheism	<i>Charles K. Trueblood</i>	515
The Seventh Hill	<i>Stewart Mitchell</i>	517
Extra Good Ones	<i>Gilbert Seldes</i>	519
Briefer Mention		522
The Theatre	<i>Gilbert Seldes</i>	528
Modern Art	<i>Henry McBride</i>	533
Musical Chronicle	<i>Kenneth Burke</i>	536
Comment	<i>The Editors</i>	539

VOLUME LXXXIV NUMBER 6

50 cents a copy

THE DIAL

MARIANNE MOORE
Editor

SCOTFIELD THAYER
Adviser

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

CHARLES NORMAN was born in 1904. He has attended New York University and lives in New York. Poems by him have appeared in *The Nation*, *The Bookman*, *The Century Magazine*, and other periodicals.

LU YU (A.D. 1125-1209) lived in the period of the decline of the Sung dynasty when North China fell into the hands of the Tartars. Having won the degree of *chin-shih*, he was made prefect of Kuei-chow in the province of Szechuan and was so fond of the natural beauty of the place that he gave its name to his collected poems. He was the founder of a school of Chinese poetry and adviser to Fan Chen-ta when Fan Chen-ta—also a poet—was governor of Szechuan. Accused by the public of unconventional manners in the presence of his superior, he called himself Fong Wun, the Unconventional Old-man.

ROBERT HYDE was born in Chicago in 1900 and was graduated from The University of California in 1922. He has worked in the bean fields, oil fields, and in kelp harvesting, in California; also as an oil engineer at Long Beach, California. He has studied Chinese under the scholar and poet, Kiang Kang Hu, and lives in New York City.

STEEFAAN COUWENBERG's prose sketch entitled *Basque Land* which appears in this issue was originally published in Dutch by the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, Amsterdam.

BERTUS HENDRIK VAN BREEMEN was born in Amsterdam, April 12, 1852. After studying theology at the Universities of Utrecht and Leyden, he went to South Africa and there lived for three years, in Natal and the Orange Free State. Returning to Holland, he entered upon editorial work for the *Utrechtsche Courant*, the *Amsterdammer*, and the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, finished his theological studies at the University of Utrecht, and came to America in 1898. He is the author of *South African Sketches* (published in Holland), has contributed to various Dutch magazines, to *The Living Age*, and for *The Dearborn Independent* has translated work from "Hebrew, Yiddish, and divers modern languages."

It is with profound regret that the Editors have accepted the resignation of Mr Paul Rosenfeld. *THE DIAL* is to be congratulated, however, that Mr Kenneth Burke has consented to assume officially the writing of the *Musical Chronicle*.

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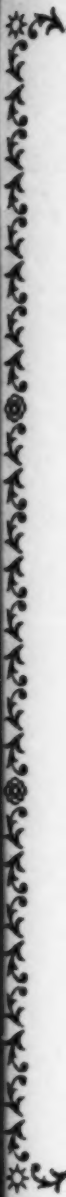
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LANDSCAPE. BY ANDRÉ DÉRAIN

Courtesy the Independent Gallery

THE DIAL

JUNE 1928

MANORBIER

(To Mr and Mrs Arthur Machen)

BY ROBERT HILLYER

It is green with ivy
But the stones are criss-crossed
With cracks and crannies,
Tooth-marks of the frost;
The roofless tower,
The sundered wall,
The gaping lancet,
Frost gnaws them all.
Time in transit
Measured by years
Has emptied the hall,
Rusted the spears.
The long rains fall
Where the marriage bed
Saw the virgin a wife
And the mother dead,
Saw the birth of the son
And the warrior head
White on the pillow
Stained with red.

Now it is summer
The swans float
Each with its double
On the scummy moat.
If you hear the fiddler

MANORBIER

Playing his fiddle
It's the wind in the crannies
With dust in its throat.
If you hear the drummer
Tapping his drum
It's a dead branch hanging
Swinging and banging,
Summoning no one,
There is no one to come.

I was born in a chamber
Under the eaves;
The room I remember
And the sound of leaves
And the sound of ocean
And ships come home
When we ran with our welcome
Knee-deep through foam.

In the garden by moonlight
Each leaf on the rose-bush
A silver flake,
A ghost of a flame!
Hearing voices, the loveless one
Fired by their passion
Fled down to the lake
Where a tall lady came.

"To-morrow at sunset,"
She said to her lover,
"Look up to my window
And I will be there."
She glimmered away,
And faint like a halo
The moon on her hair.

Most beautiful lady,
How slowly the snail

Through the grey dust lengthens
His rainbow trail.
On the steps of the sunset
Did I find you—or not?
How should you remember
When your lover forgot?

Is there nobody now
Who can speak with my speech
But the wind in the ruin,
The waves on the beach?
There are hundreds of cities
Out there beyond reach,
Three thousand miles over
The sea whence I came.
I built them myself,
I left this to the weather
And forgot my own name.

I will go up the stairway
That ends in the air,
I will stand in the chapel
And offer a prayer
To saints who for ages
Have not been there.
I will lean out of windows
That have no top
And look far below me
A dizzy drop
To the moat and the cliff
And beyond to the beach
And beyond to the ocean
Where the eyes stop.

Why did I leave
this house like a Viking?
Why did I leave it
for frosts to crack?

MANORBIER

Did the stairway lead me
 then to disaster?
Did a door ajar
 show the flame and the rack?
I have forgotten the cause of my going,
And even the cause of my coming back.

Some things with me
 are the never-dying,
All of us curs'd
 with time's effacement;
The ivy-vine grown
 so black has forgotten
The beginning tendril
 that clung to the basement;
The gap in the wall has forgotten the window,
And I, the face that looked down from the casement.

Now is the season when the whole world over
The herds are munching the ripe clover;
The green baby-hair of the crops to come
Is ruffled by the wind; the may-flies hum
In the air, and the bees intermittently humming
Dive to one flower and drone to a sweeter;
This is the mating-song season, at evening
When the lover listens his love will be coming.

But summer like winter
Conspiring slowly
To throw down the mighty
And exalt the lowly
Is gnawing at walls
All but time held holy.
By tendrils of ivy
The stones are split;
Trees shoulder the ingles
Where earls would sit,

And the ants drag the mortar
Away, bit by bit.

Who is my brother?
Who is my friend?
The song does not falter
Though the singer end.
But I, the last singer,
Forgetting my song
One summer morning
A thousand years long,
Have gone up the stairway
That ends in the air,
Surprising dead saints
With the ghost of a prayer,
And looked out of windows
That have no top,
To the beach, to the ocean,
Where the eyes stop.
But the mind will not stop.
The heart will not stop.

FIVE PROSE SKETCHES

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

THE VOYAGE

THE ship was rolling heavily with a steady list to starboard from the force of the wind which carried her lower to the side on which his cabin lay. Down, down she went without a great amount of pitching but down, down, down till the trunk near the door squeaked in its lashings and all the loose objects in the cabin shuttled and slid about the floor. Then with a slight shudder the ship rose slowly leaning again for a brief moment to windward—and with this motion and joy in his heart, he slept like an angel.

His parents had come from the other side to America in ships. His uncle had died in a ship and been buried from one. To him the sea was the grave of all his cares, the one power hopelessly subtle and uncontrolled, unbridged, unbeaten—

"I am beginning to think we should have no mercy for any one—unless we love him. Get all you can out of the other fellow before he takes it out of you." Curious bits of conversation. "*J'étais un homme très vulgaire—j'étais un voleur*"—"the twist of the years"—"Truth and Beauty married and the child was love." "*Deux cognacs, s'il vous plaît. Je suis poli, moi.*" French once more! His ear drank it in with avidity. Benedictine 10c. Fine 10c. That's something!

Then the wet and cold of the storm passed but the great waves continued, causing the ship from time to time to give three or four lurches deeper than the rest. The sky was blue overhead, the decks sanded. Evans stood by the weather rail watching the sea-gulls flying near the ship's side, especially one, a beautifully marked Mackerel gull, larger than the rest, which with motionless wings was gliding, keeping pace with the ship not ten feet from his hand resting on the rail. He watched its eye watching him—and its head shifting slightly from time to time.

There was a hailstorm that afternoon. The wind was now due north, the weather cold and squally.

NOTE: These five sketches will be included in a novel entitled *A Voyage to Pagany* to be published shortly by The Macaulay Company.

Then swiftly, the sea, limitless, filling the imagination roundly on all sides, supporting, buoyant, satisfying—was damaged. Forward, as if the work of birds flying out from beyond the horizon, the thought of land! land! The seahold upon the imaginations of the company had been broken.

England was there, little as a boat. One felt all England, all one had ever heard or felt of England, from old Mother Cobb to the last pantings of discomfort in the daily press. There it was, pathetic, an island in the sea, powerless and naïve as the small strength of a lion, or the boom of a big cannon. From the sea one could come to hold it as a god might hold an infant on his arm, for a moment. Later, the twin lights of the Scilly Islands gave an inkling, the only inkling, of the world beyond them, silent under the night sky.

CARCASSONNE

Carcassonne, a rock ruined by tears. It had to be rock-rimmed to give it credence, rock-chapeled. It tapped the rock and the sweet water flew out—a hidden gentleness which had no certain name, in them without excuse—but like rain on armour. A brief advantage for which they panted. Water! Christ. Water all within themselves. Themselves. Their defences broken, out it comes. Tears. Which have now melted the rock which conserved it and caused it to run and disappear in the sand.

Forfeitures, murders, replacements—a passionate fountain—whose passion, coloured with the ground, was ready to be coloured from the air also, giving steel to that, and getting—air, sometimes full of light, and again full of mist and cloudiness—

The chapel was cold. On the uneven floor they walked about whispering. Very old it seemed but full of a strange assurance, because possibly, they were young and felt no part in it.

The garden was better, though best was to stand in the southwest wind that tore at their garments as they went to the ramparts and looked out toward the snow mountains across the valley to the southwest, mounting the archers' galleries, peering through the slits of the *meurtrières*.

Do you remember anything of the history—

Not a word, never heard of it—

They looked long and silently, muffled from the past, at the far Pyrenees, hiding themselves from the invincible wind. They leaped down long steps from the ramparts—

Boso and Irmingard, brothers of Richard le Justicier.

The Arabs. Pippin the Short.

It can't have been an important place; I should have come across it in my mediaeval history—

Hand in hand the two ran in the *lice* between the outer and inner fortifications and found tiny daisies pressed close to the ground, as earliest flowers always are, for warmth.

They saw much of the place but their minds became stiffened and their faces, too, with the force of the wind and the cold. They hid in sunny nooks of the walls but sunless corners were desolate and they fled at last, up through a postern, out again oppressed by the stones and the death of the place—the cold—hating the obstinacy of the defences—too strong—senseless.

THE ARNO

By dawn they were at Pisa. The train was still, in a freight-yard. The stars were not yet gone. There was a moon in what Evans thought must be the west. He got up and looked about as the train began to move again softly, slowly in the grey light, thinking he might see the famous tower. Nothing. They left Pisa behind. So much for Pisa. Again he slept.

Once more he woke. The sun was up.

Leaning into the window he saw the world of form once more. He saw vineyards, trees in rows to which wires were fastened supporting grape-vines newly pruned, long reddish tendrils awaiting the sun of summer to grow new shoots and grapes. Peasants were coming into the fields. There were magpies, a bird he knew, in the young trees, magpies and crows in the furrows. Now grain and garden truck and orchards, pruned and ready. Fields of mustard in flower there were and cows and goats, by the light of the early blinding sun. Italy! He did not think of an ancient splendour but of morning and fields and vines.

Steadily the train took him into his delight.

The train which understands but a very few words and in the modern dialect only, was approaching that ancient Tuscan city of Florence but without being impressed. Evans, however, was impressed and began to decorate his spirit with fitting clothes—saying, They speak of these cities as if they were dusty or dead; or with scholarly, abated voices—

The train was running beside a narrow winding rivulet. It was the Arno, flooding its banks, from whose liquorous bounty an army of sunbeams were drinking so that the air was luminous with mist and the grass and herbage everywhere were dripping. It was the Arno preparing to bring all its country charm to pass under the old bridge.

It was the Arno, before Florence, gathering tribute from the fields—a workaday river—countryman, maker, poet—poetic river. River, make new, always new—using rain, subterranean springs to make a great bounty.

Florence, city of makers—

Sooner or later, they call us in, to make up choir benches out of oak-trees, make lace out of daisies, the circles out of roses, the white out of our despair—white as despair—totally colourless—

River, you make “the Arno” every day fresher than the greatest artists can make painted flowers: they may come to you every day for a lesson remembering only the sea that is greater.

Flow. Flow under the old bridge forever new and say to it that only that which is made out of nothing at all is forever new. Make new, make new.

And all the time he was watching the sun clearing the mists over the wild Arno and seeing it up to the top of its banks as if with ready fingers seeking to feel in among the grass. I know that feeling, he said, to be full of pleasure.

Flow new under the old bridge. . . .

And all the time he was going to Florence, Dante’s city, city of the old bridge, city of “the David,” of Raphael—he wanted to say Giotto—instead he called it: City of the Arno, and the Arno before there was a city, teaching from the fields of Proserpine, the fields of the Vernal gods. Botticelli, Donatello—now it was nearer. But he did not care for history. He knew only a river flowing through March in the sun, making, making, inviting the recreators—asking to be recreated.

It is the river god singing, that I hear, singing in the morning, asking if all making is ended. What to do?

He saw peasants leading animals, in the cold. Clickety click, clickety clack. People going into Florence began to get into his compartment. Be there by 8:30. They bowed to him, for the most part, with a momentary glance at his strangeness—perhaps; a foreigner. Then they looked out of the window or talked, or read a paper.

NAPLES

Naples did not interest him. The second day he was there, he took the *funicolare* up the hill back of the city for a view of the bay. All he wanted of Naples was—the bay.

He paused before the frescoes from Pompeii, fauns, satyrs—indifferent work, some of it. But the archaic Athena—the fluted gown stretched taut between her knees as she strode smiling forward, the spear lifted to strike. Before such understanding, he looked shamefacedly at the ground. . . . Then Cava.

The son of the hotel proprietor went with him for a walk to show him about the place before supper. Softly the quiet evening entered Evans' disturbed mind. The young chap was hoarse from yelling at a soccer game that afternoon when Cava had beaten Torre del Greco, 2 to 1.

They started to walk back of the little hotel where there was a heap of willow withes lying ready for the vine-tying. They walked on down a narrow path between small fields where women were dropping potato cuttings in rows fresh opened by men with mattocks going before them. They jumped a ditch with violets growing on its sides and came to the bed of a stream with a small sand-bar in it and so on for an hour.

Evans peered into the doors of peasant cottages as they passed. Churns, tubs, and the like lay about the back doors. The houses seemed wide open but deserted. It was growing late when they returned to the hotel for supper. The place was small, cold, and with but two or three guests in it. A solitary English woman of forty or more was sitting reading in the old-fashioned reading-room of the place, unmindful of the cold.

That night in his sweetly musty bedroom, the window wide open, Evans could hear the silence of the cold night as he lay quietly staring up at the dark ceiling, faintly lit nevertheless by a light from somewhere—from the night itself it seemed. Death it seemed to him might be sweetly like this, lying there for ever.

THE TYROL

. . . . As if coming from a shell he saw the cold, jagged, withered mountains cut out on the blue sky, snowcapped and with wind making a play of the snow on the high glissades. The train hugged the valleys.

He saw slanting ledges where his mind walked at ease aloof from the crawling world; V-shaped gorges he saw and inverted fans of fallen rock and sand by the cliff's face. Into his spirit he drew, along with his breaths, the stillness and the cold which his body could not have reached. Or he saw a great knob of even granite, shaped like a rock to hold smoothly in the hand and to stroke. Rocks precipitous, perpendicular, measured only by a few thousand feet but straight up, to man most difficult. Now he saw the pine, the evergreen woods, starting up the slopes and stopping, or from the recent rains, finger-like spouts of water fell from the tops of the visible mountain walls, showing cliffs higher, and melting snow. The sun is growing warmer. Or on flat rocks, black stains of running water spread out lacquerlike on the rock's face. To the north with the sun on them were great pinnacles, sparkling, snapping, cut out with its sharp knife on the lakes of hard blue. The minute features of the rock drew Dev from point to point, the particular conformation of some slowly turning pinnacle. Eagerly he watched it turn, revealing its person. So arose the personalities of the Gods, aloof, particular, visible, deathlike, near but far, nothing between us and them but air, space—frozen. . . .

So he sat for an hour, two hours, his face pressed upon the window-pane absorbed in the mountains, while the train laboured, and wound and stopped and started again at the little hamlet stations. To the south side of the car he shifted and saw a more gradual rise across pastures, green and flowery. But to the north a stream ran by the railway, tributary to the Rhine. Its head-waters; I don't know. Rhine and Danube, head-waters hereabouts, about the same parentage. One goes to Budapest; the other to Holland. Parting of the ways.

He went back to the mountains, once more rock-ledges where no snow clings, a great snow field, then up, up to the forbidding summit, snapping sunlight painting it orange, purple, black—A hawk there, a hawk!

In the bark crevices of the trees, Evans could see ants running, their slight antennae working nervously in and out—running perpendicularly—

Fish, trout—chamois too and ibex must be up there. On the railroad folder there was a scene, an Alpine hunter with an ibex over the nape of his neck. In the centre of culture there is a wild park—Switzerland—

He could see and he knew the details of the flowers, from

within the train, the minute perfection of spot and fibril, the cold details of the mountains; though he could see but the gross contours—yet the details came to him. Far off he recognized the aching sense of a woman, far off, a woman whom he had known, outside, far outside, going, not inside anywhere any more. A memory. Memory is the affirmation of genius; a fast-fading memory. Once he thought he saw her in the car, a pair of green satin slippers, and back he came with a start. Out of memory. She is in this train! Who? Should I know her if I saw her now? He tried to remember her features and remembering he had been trying, he found himself looking at the ridge of a frostcold distant peak—having forgotten what he was trying to recall. . . .

To forget the pain, we lose memory itself until there is nothing more. Nothing should be forgotten, yet we must forget. The hooks of memory are worn smooth with the weight of pain that has slipped from them. I remember nothing. I see and it is forgotten. Only that is brilliant which is there, there. Everything else, good and bad, is slipping away, taught by the anguish. But that which is there—it is without memory and without pain. My life is an effort to avoid memory; an escape. Fasten I will upon the thing, there outside the window, that lives without pain and without memory.

All day they were in the train, going. It took a solidity away from them all, train goes. They became fluid from the excess of their passage and flowed together—the lines between them as individuals melting only to be redefined later.

Those that got out at noon were not in the same cast with those going on. The panorama of the day. More than half Switzerland, east to west, they saw. . . .

All day, since five in the morning, the struggling and rolling train had moved with the sun through valley after valley, in mountainous passes until the mountains had seemed to enter the train possessing it so that it became a mountain train, a thing belonging to the rocks and snows— All, nearly all day, the window pelted with these sights, he felt almost a mountaineer; he grew used to the melting winter of the Alps and the implication: Thus the world is and I am part of it.



THE FISHERMAN. BY LOWELL HOUSER





GUADALUPE DANCERS. BY LOWELL HOUSER



THE MEN

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Wherein is Moscow's dignity
more than Passaic's dignity?
A few men have added colour better
to the canvas, that's all.

The river is the same
the bridge is the same
there is the same to be discovered
of the sun—

Look how cold, steelgrey
runs the water of the Passaic.
The Church-of-the-Polacks'
russian towers, bulbous

kiss the sky just so sternly
dreamily, futilely
as in Warsaw—as in Moscow.
Violet smoke rises

from the factory chimneys—only
the men are different who see it
draw it down in their minds—
or might be different.

MAXIM GORKI

1868-1928

BY ALEXANDER KAUN

OF a July afternoon you are likely to discover Maxim Gorki on the edge of a precipitous bluff above the gulf of Capo di Sorrento. From the ducal villa you wind between hot cluster-laden vines till you emerge suddenly on a clearing some twenty feet from Lamartine's favourite ilex, and catch sight of a gaunt figure doubled against the shimmering blue of sky and water. You are greeted by a curve of smoke, by a long hand with a cigarette sweeping toward you—then pointingly, to the ground. You follow the silent invitation and seat yourself on the rocky earth next to Kuzka, the terrier, who acknowledges your discretion by a quiver of the tail. Directly ahead, on the opposite shore looms Vesuvius, his plume limp in the windless heat; to the left you discern an amethyst mass—Capri. . . . The long hand, the impertinently aggressive nose and sad grey eyes of Gorki look straight down, perpendicularly. Midway of the almost sheer cliff, on a narrow ledge several hundred feet above the sea, you observe two specks—rock-hewers. Clinging to the wall for hours, these nimble southerners peck and hammer, now and then producing a deafening crash as they manage to hurl down a goodly rock. At the reverberation Gorki's nose turns toward you, screws up on one side, twisting the whole face into the grimace of a sly *muzhik*.

Kuzka rises, stretches himself, and starts toward the villa. His master breaks the silence: tea-time. They are waiting for us at the table. We walk back single file, Kuzka leading—Gorki striding widely, with the slight stoop of a tall man, half turning his mobile nose to accentuate the resounding bass of his words. His discourse—and it is to go on for hours—is rhapsodic. After praising the dexterity and courage of the stone-hewers, he passes to his favourite theme, human labour—magnificent factor in the creation of a better world. Full of scintillating generalities, his speech exchanges its directness and coarseness for a garb of refinement, of bookishness, acquiring an *ex cathedra* tone. But not for long. He

recalls his own experiences as a labourer. Now he is in his element! Among convexly vivid shapes of stevedores and bakers, scullions and cobblers, apple-vendors and cider-peddlars, bird-catchers and night-watchmen, errand-boys and knight-errants of the road—men and ex-men, in whose midst he spent his childhood and youth. Having emerged from the "lower depths" to fame and culture, Gorki recalls his past neither with vindictiveness nor with sentimentality. In a language robust and precise; with mobile emphasis, by nose, forehead, eyebrows, and mustachios, he hews out figure after figure, scene after scene, in strokes as telling and dexterous as those of the nimble Italians suspended over the waters of Capo di Sorrento. One listens enraptured. The visiting prima donna seizes his hand and presses it to her lips.

It is characteristic of him that he should shift his vision from remote beauty and grandeur to the perpendicular and the near. "I am a man of the earth," is his refrain, in conversation and letter. For him the pivot of the universe is man. With consistency, despite disheartening experiences, he has for thirty-five years sung a hymn to Man. "All for Man. All through Man." It is a voice *de profundis*, but no plaintive wail, no plea for pity; it sounds contempt for weakness, it rises as a challenge to man to conquer life and cleanse it from its pettiness.

There may have been moments when in singing that hymn his voice sounded shrill and unsure, for as soon as he departs from the soil and what is tangible, he flounders. When he speaks of the rock-hewers and stevedores, when he writes of his grandmother and of Tolstoy, of conflagrations and drunken orgies, of men and phenomena that he has observed and absorbed, he has few equals. When he generalizes or invents, he is highfaluting and ineffective; he gropes.

He is aware of his limitations; he admits that by contrast with Andreyev's extraordinary power of imagination and intuition he resembles a dray-horse beside an Arabian steed. The first volume of *The Life of Klim Samgin*, the ambitious novel which he is writing at present, deals chiefly with the Intelligentsia of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The unacclimated Gorki has treated this nondescript, apparently comprehensive yet subtly exclusive body either with resentment or with reverence, as one who does not "belong." It in turn regarded him at first as a freakish curiosity; then later, with the growth of his power and influence, as

an upstart. To the intellectual aristocracy of the Merezhkovsky-Hippius circle, he has been "a negro in a silk hat." We may anticipate a multitude of powerful portraits and scenes, however, in the subsequent parts of this novel when the author proceeds to work in his native element.

As journalist, editor, and too obliging granter of interviews, Gorki has possibly erred not a few times against tact and prudence. His political statements, pronounced with Wilsonian solemnity of the "May I not" variety, have frequently provoked a furore akin to scandal, necessitating further statements and explanations, which as a rule have failed to mend matters. He is prone to contradict himself awkwardly, to change his stand in a brief space of time, and to wish he might unsay the things he has said.

An explanation may be found in the condition of Russia itself. In the absence of parliamentary institutions, of a free press, of free organization and assembly, the Russian public however hampered by censorship, has found in literature during the last hundred years, its national utterance. As spokesman for the inarticulate millions, the writer has been expected to give voice to their pent-up aspirations, hopes, sorrows, doubts; to be an artist and also, perhaps primarily, a preacher. Few of Russia's great authors have had the temerity—that Chekhov had—to disappoint these expectations. Even in these United States, with abundant outlet for public opinion, some writers of fiction cannot resist the temptation to chant midamericanism and discuss serious issues with the cocksureness of ignorance. In Russia, where as late as the end of the nineteenth century those who could read and write did not exceed fifteen per cent of the population, it was not unnatural for authors to believe they had a pastoral mission. Gorki succumbed early to that belief and as soon as he could read, was obsessed with a desire to instruct his neighbours—in the image factory, or in the bake-shop, or among the knights of the road, or when with his first love. With the publication of his stories which met instant popular acclaim, he was prompted to heighten the monitorial tone of his writings—commensurate with responsibility—and with very few exceptions his fiction is marred here and there by didactic asides. Even in his best works he lapses into sermonizing, the reader being forewarned usually by a transition from robust language to a kind of banal bookishness. One gains the impression of a duality in style and personality.

We could not expect Gorki to be a monolith. Only professional logicians may have the appearance of uniformity, consistency, and consequentality. Mortals, and artists in particular, are a duality, even a multiplicity of Self. In Gorki, however, the elements of personality hardly blend—coexisting antipodally. An Ormazd and an Ahriman. Reject the one; accept the other. The preacher, the propagandist, the ratiocinator, the victim of books and of the Russian disease of philosophizing. Eliminating these we have the essential Gorki, keen of eye, precise of stroke, opulent of memory and experience.

Memory and experience. Here Gorki's strength lies. He is a memoirist, his best productions appearing in the second period, with *My Childhood*. In his early romantic tales, in the tramp sketches, in his descriptions of the lower and middle classes, in his post-revolutionary studies of grotesque Russians, in his plays, novels, and autobiographic works proper, he uses not inventive imagination but imaginative memory. With a prodigious exactness he recalls and can make you visualize the curve of a nose, the shape of a mouth, the colour of a beard, a gait or intonation caught twenty years ago in the Adirondacks, or during his childhood at Nizhni-Novgorod. In conversation he amazes you with this facility of retaining and picturing essential detail. In his written portraits, you must distinguish between such clever sketches as those drawn in New York or in Italy, and solid, Cézannesque images of his countrymen.

Again a crack in the bell. In conversation and in articles he has vehemently championed the West, its civilization, its science, its technical achievements—steps toward Man's conquest of the physical world. Thus he has repeatedly attacked the Asiatic elements in his countrymen; their sluggishness, rusticity, passivity, cruelty, ugliness, lack of culture. On such subjects, in conversation, in essays, or in *Tales of Italy*, he becomes that same bookish Gorki descanting on political issues, heavily dealing with the Intelligentsia, with Anatole France or Romain Rolland. Gorki is a Russian *muzhik*, a sturdy Volgar, a Slav with Asiatic cheek-bones. His Westernism is purely of the head, as is evident by his transformed face and gestures, should the visiting accordionist strike up a Volga tune, a gypsy plaint, a recitative of the Steppes.

He is powerful when he combines memory with experience—not merely with tourist impressions. His mastery is thus limited

to the description of Russia and Russians, a field of no modest dimensions. What a tremendous gallery of portraits—those Volga hoboos, provincial eccentrics, temperamental merchants, perpetual seekers, petty, vulgar, stolid, sadistic individuals endowed with charm which the author cannot deny them despite the interfering dictates of his head. And those other Russians whom he has known and “experienced”—Tolstoy, Chekhov, Korolenko, Andreyev, Lenin, Krasin. . . . This vast and variegated world Gorki has absorbed and portrayed with unexcelled power. Limiting of the field in no way limits mastery. On the contrary. *In der Beschränkung . . .*

YET WATER RUNS AGAIN

BY EDWARD SAPIR

Water congeals, and wheels run down. So man
Has floats of ice upon his drowsing blood
Whereof the bottom cakes in winter mud.
Such times winds of direction will not fan
His spirit down the stream in that strange plan
Which he devised in humble hardihood,
But, holding nothingness well understood,
He's lost the hint of what he once began.

Yet water runs again, and wheels are wound.
So man forthwith will have himself unbound,
And with a sudden gust of certainty
Familiar winds will blow the ice aground
And the full deep of the blood's channel free
For spirit sailing down in gallantry.

THE BULLS

(To the Painter Zuloaga)

BY AZORIN

Translated From the Spanish by Katie Lush

AS I enter the house a dog begins to bark.

"Lie down, Carlín!" Doña Isabel commands.

"Good afternoon, Doña Isabel," I greet her. "How is Don Tomás? Has he gone out yet?"

The dog comes up to me, his head down, growling uncertainly. A voice from the office calls: "Is that you, Azorín? Come in."

I go into the office. Don Tomás is standing on a chair, his arms stretched up to the top of a cupboard on which eight or ten hats are piled. Don Tomás brings one down; before he is satisfied he has brought them all down.

"I'm looking for a hat up here," he explains.

"But these are tall hats," I reply, looking at them attentively.

"Yes, they are tall hats; I'm looking for a broad-brimmed one that I thought was here."

"Do all these hats belong to you?"

"Yes, they are all mine; the history of my life is here."

"Now I know something of the dandy you must have been."

"You could be well dressed in those days," he says, "but to-day there isn't a tailor who could cut a coat like one of these."

Don Tomás takes a broad-brimmed hat from a hat-box. "You see this hat?" he demands. "I wore this to the Romerist meeting in the Teatro de la Comedia in the year . . ."

He thinks for a moment and then turns to me: "Do you remember, Azorín, what year the Romerists held that meeting in the Teatro de la Comedia?"

"I'm not sure, Don Tomás, I think it must have been about 1898."

"Are you sure? Wasn't it before that other meeting at Barcelona, in the Exposición Universal?"

At the mention of it, Don Tomás takes another hat from another box.

"This," he says, "is the hat I wore to that Barcelona meeting."

"What made you buy new ones every time, when you had so many at home?"

"I'll tell you," he replied. "Now and then I had to go to Madrid. While I was there I would buy a hat and wear it home. The next time I went the fashion had changed, so I had to buy another."

From another hat-box Don Tomás took another hat. "This one," he said, holding it to the light, "is fairly right still. I bought it for the last meeting we held at the Fives' Court of Jai-Alai, in the year . . ."

He thought for a moment: "Do you recall, Azorín, when that Jai-Alai meeting was?"

"Not exactly, Don Tomás, but it seems to me it was in 1900 or 1899."

"Oh no! It must have been earlier than that. The coat ought to be here that I was wearing that time."

Don Tomás opens a wardrobe and begins to rummage among coats and trousers, overcoats and jackets. Doña Isabel stands in the doorway.

"Look, Tomás!" she calls, "It's getting late . . ."

Don Tomás turns with a frock-coat on his shoulder. "I'm coming! I'm coming now!" Don Tomás cries. "Is everybody ready? It would be too bad if the storm breaks this afternoon."

With Don Tomás hurriedly putting on a white hat, we go into the hall and catch the rustle of silk, the clear rhythm of tapping heels, a light cough. Juanita appears, lively, high-strung. She wears a white mantilla and has some carnations in her hand.

"Mama!" Juanita had called to Doña Isabel, but stopped abruptly, as if she could not find the words for what she wanted to say. Juanita's face is an oval, soft olive, with bronze lights and reflections, the delicate, subtle bronze one rarely sees, and sees always with surprise, in the skin of dark women.

Juanita's eyes are large and dark; a mysterious fire shines from them, kindling and glowing and then suddenly gone. Her lips are full and red. Her feet are small, slender, arched, curving sweetly from high, narrow heels; the openwork of her silk stocking reveals the rose-tinted skin. And—this last stroke of the brush will complete her portrait—fine, silky hair curling on the temples adds the

note of black required by the amber skin. A painter of the things of Spain would swear that Juanita could not have been otherwise.

"Mama!" Juanita demands again, showing the carnations to Doña Isabel. Thunder rumbles, muffled and distant.

"Is that thunder?" Doña Isabel asks.

"I'm afraid we are going to have a storm," says Don Tomás.

Impatient now and nervous, Juanita asks for the third time: "Mama, how am I to wear the carnations?"

"The secretary said they could be worn in the hair and in the bodice of the dress," Doña Isabel answers smiling.

"Yes, yes!" Juanita laughs gaily, the curve of her bosom rising and falling softly.

"What secretary?" I ask.

"The secretary of La Ultima Moda. The subscribers consult her and she answers their questions."

"I'll show you!" Juanita says. And with a quick movement, a rustle of silk, and a rhythm of tapping heels, she disappears, returning a minute later with a magazine in her hand.

"We asked how carnations should be worn for a bull-fight," Doña Isabel tells me.

"And she replied," Juanita continues: "The carnations may be worn in the hair; or they may be fastened in the corsage. These carnations are generally red, but white may of course be used as well. The two colours make a pretty contrast.'"

"The information has been received," Don Tomás comments, and strikes his stick on the floor.

It grows darker; thunder breaks again, terrifying, tremendous.

"There's the storm," observes Don Tomás.

Consternation holds us dumb; we peer through the doorway at the leaden sky. A phaeton—one of those lumbering, old-fashioned, comfortable, provincial phaetons—pulls up at the door.

"Ramón," Don Tomás calls to the groom who drives it, "Ramón, what do you think of the weather? Are we going to get a wetting this afternoon?"

Ramón answers smiling: "It looks a bit like it, *señor!*"

Lightning flashes vividly, thunder crashes with a dry, terrific noise. Heavy, dense rain begins to fall. Down there at the Feria, people are running about in a panic and hurriedly putting up umbrellas.

PRELUDE

BY CONRAD AIKEN

I

Winter for a moment takes the mind; the snow
Falls past the arclight; icicles guard a wall,
The wind moans through a crack in the window,
A keen sparkle of frost is on the sill.
Only for a moment; as spring too might engage it,
With a single crocus in the loam, or a pair of birds;
Or summer with hot grass; or autumn with a yellow leaf.
Winter is there, outside, is here in me:
Drapes the planets with snows, deepens the ice on the moon,
Darkens the darkness that was already darkness.
The mind too has its snows, its slippery paths,
Walls bayoneted with ice, leaves ice-encased.
Here is the in-drawn room to which you return
When the wind blows from Arcturus: here is the fire
At which you warm your hands and glaze your eyes;
The piano, on which you touch the cold treble;
Five notes like breaking icicles; and then silence.

II

The alarm-clock ticks, the pulse keeps time with it,
Night and the mind are full of sounds. I walk
From the fireplace, with its imaginary fire,
To the window, with its imaginary view.
Darkness, and snow ticking the window: silence,
And the knocking of chains on a motor-car, the tolling
Of a bronze bell, dedicated to Christ.
And then the uprush of angelic wings, the beating
Of wings demonic, from the abyss of the mind:
The darkness filled with a feathery whistling, wings
Numberless as the flakes of angelic snow,

The deep void swarming with wings and sound of wings.
The winnowing of chaos, the aliveness
Of depth and depth and depth dedicated to death.

III

Here are the bickerings of the inconsequential,
The chatterings of the ridiculous, the iterations
Of the meaningless. Memory, like a juggler,
Tosses its coloured balls into the light, and again
Receives them into darkness. Here is the absurd,
Grinning like an idiot, and the omnivorous quotidian,
Which will have its day. A handful of coins,
Tickets, items from the news, a soiled handkerchief,
A letter to be answered, notice of a telephone call,
The petal of a flower in a volume of Shakespeare,
The program of a concert. The photograph, too,
Propped on the mantel, and beneath it a dry rosebud;
The laundry bill, matches, an ash-tray, Utamaro's
Pearl-fishers. And the rug, on which are still the crumbs
Of yesterday's feast. These are the void, the night,
And the angelic wings that make it sound.

IV

What is the flower? It is not a sigh of colour,
Suspuration of purple, sibilation of saffron,
Nor aureate exhalation from the tomb.
Yet it is these because you think of these,
An emanation of emanations, fragile
As light, or glisten, or gleam, or coruscation,
Creature of brightness, and as brightness brief.
What is the frost? it is not the sparkle of death,
The flash of time's wing, seeds of eternity;
Yet it is these because you think of these.
And you, because you think of these, are both
Frost and flower, the bright ambiguous syllable
Of which the meaning is both no and yes.

V

Here is the tragic, the distorting mirror
In which your gesture becomes grandiose;
Tears form and fall from your magnificent eyes,
The brow is noble, and the mouth is God's.
Here is the God who seeks his mother, Chaos—
Confusion seeking solution, and life seeking death.
Here is the rose that woos the icicle; the icicle
That woos the rose. Here is the silence of silences
Which dreams of becoming a sound, and the sound
Which will perfect itself in silence. And all
These things are only the uprush from the void,
The wings angelic and demonic, the sound of the abyss
Dedicated to death. And this is you.

ALASTOR

BY MALCOLM COWLEY

PROFESSOR PECK, in writing his recent life of Shelley,¹ has performed a labour of disinterested scholarship. He has studied sources; he has consulted all the printed authorities; he has travelled from Los Angeles to London in search of unpublished documents; he has collated texts and traced the complicated history of metaphors; he has, in a word, devoted laborious years to collecting all the facts which bear on the poet's career. It is not likely that many of these facts will ever be questioned, nor that the present work will shortly be superseded. Until an even more patient scholar has devoted an even longer period of study to the same material, these two monumental volumes will remain, in factual matters, the authoritative life of Shelley.

However, the equipment of a great biographer should include something more than pure scholarship and a mastery of fact: it should include a sort of creative sympathy which is not to be confused with adulation, and which is strangely lacking in the present work. Indeed, it is absent to such a degree that we wonder why Professor Peck, out of the whole field of letters, should have chosen this particular subject for his distinguished researches. His attitude is neither friendly nor wholly impartial; it is that of a hostile judge, who, having weighed the evidence and balanced probabilities, now rises to pronounce his sentence. He decides that Shelley was ungrateful, was guilty of unmanly conduct, was a corruptor of morals; and finally, forgetting that a great poet has the right to be judged by his peers, he announces that Shelley's sins "of fickleness, of rhapsodies over many women, and his occasional surrenders to desire, may be in part, at least, forgiven, because of his genuine fondness for children." The critical ineptitude of this judgement could scarcely be exceeded.

Moreover, in addition to this special weakness of the present

¹ Shelley: His Life and Work. By Walter Edwin Peck. Two volumes. 8vo. 1022 pages. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$12.50.

work, there is a general weakness inherent in the whole category of factual or "definitive" biographies. They are, in reality, neither definitive nor self-sufficient. They exist in relation to an imaginary work, which consists, in this instance, of our whole body of knowledge concerning Shelley. In part, Professor Peck restates or condenses this imaginary work, and in part he offers marginal corrections based on his own discoveries. Inevitably these discoveries, which may or may not be important, are so enlarged as to be out of focus with the rest of the narrative. A single example will suffice. Professor Peck devotes a whole paragraph to proving exhaustively that Shelley, in the midst of an incidental voyage, left an unimportant town on Saturday, June 29, and not on Sunday, June 30.

Fortunately, not all of the author's discoveries are equally insignificant. There are cases in which they help to dispel a false and rather prevalent attitude toward Shelley. They prove, for example, that he was not entirely divorced from earth, that he was often a capable man of affairs, and that his sense of humour was fully developed. They show his close relationship with the thought of his time. Moreover, they illustrate his borrowings from and his lendings to contemporary writers—for, as Shelley himself remarked, "Poets, even the best of them, are a very chameleon-like race; they take the colour not only of what they feed on, but of the very leaves under which they pass."

As a whole, the present volumes are occupied less with his outward life than with his work. They are fully justified in this emphasis, for, among modern authors, Shelley was pre-eminently a man of works, a man who lived in his poems. During the years from 1812, when he began *Queen Mab*, till his death in 1822, working sometimes with ease and sometimes with desperate slowness, he produced a quantity of verse which has not often been equalled by poets whose life-span far exceeded his—and a quantity of verse, moreover, which has perhaps interfered with our full appreciation of its quality. During the same years, he was writing a number of noble essays; he was learning Italian, Spanish, and German; he was translating from five languages, and sharing in the highest intellectual life of his period. His biography, during these crowded years, is a sort of mental history, to which his various love-affairs

were only interludes, and in which the real events were the successive production of great poems.

M Paul Valéry has recently referred to the existence, in literary matters, of what might be called a law of supply and demand. "The readers of a given era," he remarks, "always obtain the quality of literature which they desire and which is in keeping with their culture and capacity for attention." One is tempted to cite the period of Shelley and Keats as an exception to this rule; the readers of that era received far more than they desired, far more than they were fitted to absorb, and the mass of them reacted—brutally in the case of Keats; hysterically in the case of Shelley. The leading publisher of the day, which was that of Castlereagh and Peterloo, called him "the vilest wretch now living." An English soldier in Pisa heard the name of "that damned atheist," and suddenly knocked him down. The reaction of the quarterly reviews was almost as physical, and it is no longer a paradox to say that it was not Adonais himself, but the author of Adonais, whose life was snuffed out by his critics.

Their most violent comments reached him at a dangerous crisis in his career. By 1822, Shelley had given the final, the most perfect expression, to a generous and impractical attitude which still persists. He was now preparing to enter new fields of poetry, but, for these difficult expeditions, he required the sympathy or support of at least a limited public. This sympathy seemed lacking. He began to question his powers, to wonder whether the reviewers were justified, to ask whether the verdict of a severe posterity would not be "Guilty—death!" Like a hunted animal, he was contemplating flight to some island "beyond the reach of mercantile communications." He requested Trelawney, three weeks before his own final cruise, to procure him a small quantity of "prussic acid, or essential oil of bitter almonds." He had almost lost the desire to live. And his sudden death, in spite of the dramatic circumstances with which it was surrounded—the departure in a squall with the husband of his mistress, the long wait of two women on the beach, the body cast up by the sea, the funeral pyre, the heart that refused to be consumed—cannot fail to impress us as being, from the standpoint of history, far less accidental than that of Keats.

For, it was written that Shelley should be drowned. An eager and foolhardy boatman, he had narrowly escaped death in half the waters of western Europe—the English lakes, the Thames, the Channel, the Arno, the Mediterranean. On the Lake of Geneva, when his boat threatened to capsize in a storm, he had seated himself on a locker, “and grasping the rings of each end firmly in his hands, declared his intention to go down in that position.” He never learned to swim, and explained to Trelawney that “in case of wreck he would vanish instantly.” He was half expecting this end, this passage over troubled waters to an acquiescent death. The image occurs not only in his life; it is one which he employs in his finest poems. And so, when he was drowned in a voyage like that of his own *Alastor*—when he deserted a world in which, like *Alastor*, he had found scant pasture for his dreams—he was offering himself as a sacrifice, “a rare and regal prey,” not to the waves alone, but to a symbol.



Collection Rutherford

PAHOIN RITUALISTIC HEAD (GABON)



THE CREEK

BY STERLING NORTH

WE must have been very poor the year that I was seven. The room that served as a kitchen and dining-room had a floor of wide pine boards scrubbed smooth and white. A bright rag rug covered the floor near the pump stand. An iron range in an alcove kept an oak fire day and night. We ate at a table covered with oil-cloth. If there were other things in the room I have forgotten them.

I think that my older sister must have been away most of the time for I never remember seeing her. Perhaps she came home Sundays and sat stiffly about the kitchen, but I am not sure. There is little else that I remember about the family except that my father's hair was already white, and he seemed to be tired after the day's ploughing. I have only the faintest image of Mother, although she was kind to me.

A creek ran under a stone bridge a half a mile down the little dirt road, and it is an image of that creek that fills my mind. A boy of my own age would meet me at the bridge and fish with me. I do not remember his name but I remember that he had sun-browned skin and heavy brown hair and that he could run faster than I could. Shiners and chubs and sun-fish swam in the creek. We caught them on long, peeled, willow poles, with black string. When I rubbed my fingers on the smooth surface of the willow pole it gave me a pleasant, chilly feeling up and down my spine. We fished together all through the warm months, and when we grew tired of fishing we would wander along the creek. There was a little piece of marsh land where the creek ran into the lake, and there was coarse marsh-grass that turned brown in the fall. Muskrats built brown houses from the grass and wild ducks dropped into the little pool that the creek made.

In the morning I would swing on my swing under the oak-tree or play in the dust of the driveway. Sometimes I would climb on the low roof of the house and lie in the sun for an hour or more. In the afternoon I went to the creek.

But often I was lonesome. The boy that I met at the bridge did not understand about many things. We used to look for little stones on the beach along the edge of the lake. I found round, white or cloudy, quartz pebbles. Others were smooth and oval, and clear like water. He would hunt for little jagged bright stones. I told him that the stones he found were not pretty at all, that stones had to be round and smooth or they were not pretty. But I knew that he did not understand.

It was the same way with fish. Shiners and chubs are silver-coloured and swift in the water, so I kept all that I caught and took them home in a pail to put in the round tank near the barn. But the boy that fished with me liked the little sun-fish that were all colours. The sun-fish had prickly fins on their backs and they were not as smooth as minnows. I did not care for them at all.

So there was no use telling him that the days were little circles and the years big ones, or that God looked like the reflection of an old man on the surface of water. Like a reflection on water because you could see right through the face into the clearness beyond. The boy that I fished with would not have understood. I was not sure of these things myself so I thought I would ask Mother about them.

The room where I slept had two windows that opened toward the lake. The wind filled the white curtains till they curved like sails. I liked the white curtains, but I think that I liked the white sheets on my bed even more. When I woke in the morning I would move one of my legs between the smooth sheets and shiver. I would never come down to breakfast until Mother came to get me.

I had forgotten to ask whether a year was a big circle or not, it did not trouble me any more. But I did want to know about God. I told Mother all that I thought about God and how his beard waved when the reflection on the surface was disturbed. She said that I should not say such things about God.

Then I asked her about Heaven, and if it had little streams filled with shiners and chubs. She said that she did not know, but that she thought there were streams. Her voice sounded like the wind that blew around the house at night. She was tired because she had to work in the fields.

I generally ate oatmeal out of a big blue bowl and then took

crumbs out to the door-step to feed the sparrows. They flocked down about me wherever I went. Mother said I was like Saint Francis; but when I asked her to tell me about Saint Francis she said that she had read about him a long time ago but had forgotten everything except that he could call the birds down about him.

One morning Mother did not come to wake me and when I went downstairs Father was getting breakfast. He took me to Blue Mounds with the horse and buggy. It had rained the night before and the water stood in pools and in the ruts. When the wheels ran through the pools it upset their shining surfaces. I asked him why we were going to Blue Mounds. He said that Mother was sick and that he was taking me to my aunt's house for a few days. I wanted to know what it meant to be sick but Father could not tell me very well.

There were no streams in the town, nor any pools with minnows in them. I only saw a very few sparrows there. There were no places to find smooth white stones nor any boys like the one I fished with in the creek below the stone bridge. I just sat on the steps and wanted to go home. My aunt was good to me and gave me everything that I wanted to eat, but she had no blue bowl for my oatmeal. The first fall days had come and there was a fire in the fire-place some of the time. I would lie on my elbows looking into the fire, trying to see the flocks of fire-sparrows that started up from the burning log. A few leaves had turned yellow and were falling from the elm-trees. They blew up and down the streets of the little town. I thought the leaves seemed almost like birds when I saw them falling.

When Father came for me his face seemed more tired than I had ever seen it. I said nothing while we were driving home because I was always a little afraid of him. I thought of the things I would do. I would swing under the oak-tree all morning; and then I would find my fish-pole where I had hidden it and go fishing after dinner. We had reached home before I asked if Mother were still sick. He made no answer, but when we went into the house he led me to the front bedroom where she lay so quietly it seemed as if she were not breathing. I could stand it no longer and I ran out of the house and down the road past the sumac hedge. No one called after me so I went as far as the bridge.

There was nobody at the bridge so I just sat on a big stone and looked down into the creek. It was flooded with brown water from the rains and had overrun its banks. A rainy wind blew through the willows and the coarse marsh-grass. I shut my eyes and tried to think of Heaven where Mother had said there might very well be streams with shiners and smooth white stones in them. All at once I was lonesome, and I started to go home up the wet, earthy-smelling road.

I walked into the kitchen where my sister sat gazing at the wall and yet beyond it.

"Aren't we going to have any dinner?" I asked.

She sat without moving; as if she did not know I had entered the room.

Then I lay down on the floor and cried and cried.

ODE

BY CHARLES NORMAN

The water bulged, swelled the green-arching waves
that drowned the shadows of lean gulls;
ploughing the sea the galleons swayed
burrowing, and the huge hulls
plunged from perilous heights.
Around them moved the army of the sea
the undulating green-clad knights
shooting a million arrows of sharp spray.

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PROMENADE. BY ADOLF DEHN



THE POETRY OF RACINE

BY BENEDETTO CROCE

Translated From the Italian by Raffaello Piccoli

THERE is good reason to-day for reverting to the poetry of Racine; not as poetry merely, founded upon an incomparable purifying power, but because qualities in it uniquely provide an antidote to loose, noisy tendencies in contemporary pseudo-poetry.

Karl Vossler in a somewhat recent study of Racine's poetry,¹ asserts that it is difficult to induce English and Germans to like it but that Italians seem to find it accessible; and according first place to Fubini's remarkable book, *J. Racine e la Critica delle sue Tragedie* (Torino, 1925) he mentions a number of recent works by Italians. Vossler is right in regarding Shakespeare as an obstacle to the full understanding of Racine; for despite the fact that love and knowledge of Shakespeare foster a purer idea of poetry, they have at times, through mistaken or superficial interpretation, given birth to a new kind of realistic academy with characteristic standards and models, different from the old classicist academy though not less arbitrary in method. This little book constitutes in concise form Vossler's wide experience as historian, philologist, and critic, and is an apt instrument for those preparing to read and meditate upon the tragedies of Racine. We have here a portrait not less delicate than penetrating, of Racine the man, his character, his life and relations with contemporary society; and Herr Vossler's comments on the way in which Racine studied and utilized Euripides, upon the physiognomy of his language and versification, are invaluable. Not less significant is his reiterated interpretation of that so-called "psychological self-analysis" which Racine's characters seem to present. It is, he says, in no sense the product of aesthetic impotence, of intellectualism in contrast to representations of actual life, but a drama of conscience, searching, deepening, clarifying itself; even the subordinates not being idle, but aiding that clarification. On the other hand, does anybody really believe that Shakes-

¹ Karl Vossler: *Jean Racine*. München, 1926.

peare's characters are actual flesh and blood, not souls; or, better still, varied and dialectic expressions of the poet's soul? Have not even they—unjustifiably—been accused of being too lyrical and emphatic? Persons and actions in poetry have always, in a sense, the value of symbols—not of visible historical images; and between one poet and another there is no qualitative difference, only that difference in mode which is answerable to age, temper, and varied emotions.

Looking for a "point of view" from which Racine's poetry should be considered in order to determine its constitution, the law peculiar to it, and its motive, Vossler first makes it clear to us that it is essentially an interior force—an active principle or will, but not of the kind that exhausts itself in external action, for then it would shine in its successes as in epic poetry or in history, where deeds and works are more important than individuals. It would be broken, driven back or withdrawn, hindered, curbed, repentant. Instead of achieving its aim and dying, it rebounds to its author and kindles a consuming flame in his breast. It is, in a way, always failure that is celebrated in these tragedies; not failure in the abstract, however, as we know it in pessimistic lyric or satire; and its virtue lies in that self-evaluation, that getting hold of self, which it induces in the characters. This is Racine's true inspiration. Thus Vossler examines and interprets the tragedies, from the *Thébaïde* to *Athalie*, not omitting the comedy of the *Plaideurs*, in which the same fundamental situation reappears. Only in the two last plays, the two religious plays, *Esther* and *Athalie*, do the characters achieve success, and in them not through the exercise of the personal and particular will, but by submitting to one which is higher and is universal; and these two plays are also the only ones in which unity of place is not observed—exceptions which confirm the rule.

This is subtle and ingenious although slightly artificial and perhaps too subtle, too ingenious since still bound up with the concepts of "drama," "epos," and "lyric," as things that can be rigorously distinguished; and it cannot be applied to the whole of Racine's work, for there are various exceptions, notably in the instance of the last tragedies; especially the last and greatest one. It seems to me that critical interpretation might proceed more simply and satisfactorily by considering again the common verdict which makes Racine—in opposition to Corneille—the "poet of the passions":

a verdict which is rather vague but deserving of attention because, like all popular verdicts on poetry, it conveys the impression which the poetry made for the most part, and is still making. To be more explicit we might say that Racine's inspiration is the mysterious and rapacious character of passion—delighting itself or tormenting itself. Passion in a pure or impure, in a mild or fierce, in a noble or evil heart; passion relapsing in ruin and death, or issuing triumphant; passion aided or crushed: by powers human; by powers divine: by the principle of good, leading to salvation; by the power of evil oppressing and destroying: such are the protagonists of Racine's plays; but the constant centre of each is always passion, and it is passion transfused into poetry that invests them with charm. It is passion in Andromaque who, loyal to the memory of Troy and Hector, eager for solitude and oblivion for herself and her surviving son, is ready to find peace in death, but determined to preserve untainted that fidelity to the past which is her secret source of strength; it is passion in Bérénice who struggles persistently for the possession of the man she loves, and who—unwilling to surrender—finally, in the very strength of her passion, finds strength to overcome it and make it subordinate in the complexity of human interests. She becomes aware that Bérénice "*ne vaut pas tant d'alarmes*," that personal affection must not overthrow the social order and make "*l'univers malheureux*." In Eriphile, the lonely, furtive child of guilt, it is burning passion—a turbid, unwholesome mania, irremediable till destroyed in the ill-born creature's self-destruction; and the passion of Phèdre is in origin and growth a little similar to, and a little different from Eriphile's, accompanied as it is by consciousness of sin and feelings of self-abhorrence. But it is also Acomat's wholly political and ambitious passion for power and revenge, undeviating, careful, and deliberate but instantaneous in action, contemptuous of love except as the tool of strategy, and annoyed by it only as it interferes with higher game; it is passion in Mithridate, an illimitable dream of empire, of beneficent salvage, and of the conquest of Rome; and by way of conclusion, it is passion in Joad and in Athalie—a manifestation in the former from the depths of traditional Jewish priestly dominance; aroused in the latter by the shedding of her kindred's blood, in avenging which with blood, she founds on bloodshed a tyrannic power which intoxicates yet frightens her. Critics who have interpreted passion in these

plays as purely erotic, delimit Racine's soul, unless eroticism be synecdoche for passion in general; on the other hand I should say that Vossler also narrows the concept by emphasis on renunciation, which is but a single aspect or transmutation of passion. Nor can I entirely disagree with those critics who deny religious feeling to Racine, even in his religious plays; not that he is not earnestly religious, or that the religious accent in his plays seems false, but because the impact predominately is that of passion as such, not that of religious exaltation. One remembers what Madame de Sévigné said of those plays: "*Il aime Dieu comme il aimait ses maîtresses; il est pour les choses saintes comme il était pour les prophanes.*"

If we keep in mind this poetic centre in Racine's work, we can understand why the tragedies seem rich poetically, in proportion as they become the song of passion, and why those passages which speak most directly to our souls, which become part of our souls, are the situations and moments of passion, the passionate and emotional characters—the greater ones which we have cited and lesser ones like Junie in *Britannicus*, and Monime in *Mithridate*. But almost invariably in the tragedies there is also something else: there is the dramatic tissue, with the characters and actions that weave it and stretch it; and such actions and characters are often from the point of view of poetry merely decorative, though dramatically essential. Which characters and actions, one may ask? And I should say, the ones that do not speak, or that speak not so directly to our souls—that we do not cherish in memory equally with the rest. Racine studies them always with very great care and with a fine power of psychological analysis; but they spring rather from intellect than from imagination; from requirements of plot, not at the voice of the emotions. Such elements are to be found in all the tragedies, in differing proportions and degree: *Oreste* and *Pylade*, even *Pyrrhus*, and *Oenone* in *Andromaque*, have this aspect of the made character if we may call it such. This may also be said of *Hippolyte* and *Thésée* in *Phèdre*, and of one or other character in each play. Their language tends to be madrigalesque, flowery, polite, and courtly, while *Andromaque* knows how to speak the simple words: "*Quel charme ont pour vous des yeux infortunés!*" and thus *Bérénice*: "*Mais parliez-vous de moi quand je vous ai surpris?*" and *Acomat*: "*Moi, jaloux! Plût au ciel qu'en me manquant de foi, L'imprudent Bajazet n'eût offensé que moi!*" A critical examina-

tion of single tragedies cannot but establish this varying relationship between personal-fantastic creation on the one hand, and construction on the other; the naïve reader is conscious of it and it constitutes indeed the critical problem in Racine as in other poets. This relationship must be dealt with delicately for the two things often pass into each other, and Racine is always the exquisite artist, permitting himself no unconsidered separation of the poetic from the non-poetic; but it is a thing we must take into account and Vossler does this with sure taste, in certain observations apropos of single characters, as when he declines to acknowledge the consistency of Britannicus and Bajazet.

There are two plays, however, in which the critical problem no longer consists in that relationship since its terms are not found in them, or at any rate are not distinct and contrasting: namely, those two plays of religious argument composed by Racine after his twelve years' silence, *Esther* and *Athalie*. In the former the contrast is lost in the fairy-tale intonation, that something of *lächelnder Märchenzauber* which is so well perceived by Vossler, whose analysis I accept entirely; in the latter it is submerged in the wholly passionate, wholly mysterious intonation, full of *horror sacer*, which gives life to that admirable play and creates its characters, its plot, its scenes. Vossler, like all critics, feels the greatness of this work, the greatness of the masterpiece; but in consequence of his definition of Racine's dramatic sentiment—as of the relationship between *Misserfolg* and *Selbstbesinnung*—he remains bewildered in its presence; so much so that, in order to elude his perplexity, he adopts Imbriani's definition of Faust: a mistaken masterpiece, with the emphasis on the second word. For him, *Athalie* "transcends dramatic form," and the action loses itself "in epic grandeur and in prophetic distance"; "the style of Racine's times was not prepared for, and fortified against, the vigour of that poetry." To tell the truth *Athalie* transcends the pre-established criterion, the somewhat scholastic concept of dramatic action, but does not transcend poetry—the only thing that matters. *Athalie* does not belong to a Racine attempting the impossible, but rather to a Racine who has reached the perfection of his passionate expressive tendency. The hero of the play, the priest Joad, is not "a hero after Racine's heart," says Vossler, "but Racine need not on this account belittle him, suspect him, or disapprove of him: it is impossible to speak either of in-

clination or of repulsion in the presence of a mere *phenomenon* such as this is." And it is true that this *phenomenon*, the phenomenon of passion, the "phenomenal passion," dark, religious, sanguinary, all will and all obedience to the will of God, which attracts Racine— attracts him to Joad as, somewhat differently coloured, it attracts him to Athalie, impious and tyrannical, to Mathan, corrupt and sacrilegious, and to the predestined child Eliacin-Joas: we do not know what he will be in the future, after taking power in his hands; so respectful and pious and so perfectly educated by the priest, concentrating in himself the heritage of so much blood and of so many evil deeds, having, as Vossler observes with great penetration, a Janus head. In the light of prophetic hints, against the background of his preceptor's preoccupations the lovely child's face presents to us *das abgewandte Verbrechergesicht*, the averted profile of a criminal.

RELICS

BY LU YU

Translated From the Chinese by Kwei Chen

Opening my satchel, I cannot refrain from grieving!
On the broken pieces of faint silk the fragments of old paintings—

I yet know all their names.

The willow-trees are amply shady—the bright days of spring still linger;

The peach-blossoms, uncommonly lovable—just after rain; the sun anew;

Light, swift, the orioles play here and talk to one another;

There, rolling, mountain-like, the surprising waves—we hear them roaring!

Ah, such relics, works of the centuries; few survive!

Insects consume them and dust fouls them—

Beholding them, I have but tears; tears flow and flow . . .

LIGHTS

BY HOWARD HAYES

HIS robbing-house was across the city and in getting there he kept to the streets near the wharves; he liked those deserted waterfront streets. He had swung along for several blocks when he heard ahead of him the rattle of winches and the shouts of stevedores. Evidently a ship putting in the last of her cargo; the seemingly chaotic, orderly bustle had an almost hypnotic effect on him—even more fascinating at night with flood-lights glaring.

He rounded the corner of a warehouse and stopped. Under the streaming brilliance from hooded lights, stevedores with glistening arms and faces guided great rope nets to piles of goods. Other sweating men loaded them, then cables which vanished in the darkness above, raised the loads, then with winches running wild, the goods disappeared through the hatches of the ship.

In this illuminated spot on the blackness of the harbour there was a rhythmic swing of activity. Yellow booms extended up at crazy angles; bulky blackness was everywhere below.

Harrison noticed that he was on Pier 16, to which the West Star tied up. He and Merton Ramsey, the radio operator, had been together at school, but had seen each other since, only at long intervals when the West Star was in port. Ramsey always had some stories to tell that you couldn't quite believe. They had remained close friends.

The black ship with the lights on her decks might be the West Star. Harrison eagerly picked his way along the wharf to the ladder and as he came over the rail a voice shouted, "Say, are you the new Ordinary?"

"No," said Harrison, "I came aboard to see Mr Ramsey, the radio operator."

"I thought it was that ordinary seaman we are waiting for," said the Chief Mate, smiling at Harrison as Ramsey came up. The three turned to watch a netful of new wooden packing-cases descend quickly into the hold.

"We're making Liverpool, Hamburg, Bremen, and a few more this trip," said Ramsey as the three leaned over the rail and watched the collapsed net fly up from the hatch.

Harrison could scarcely explain it to himself, but he knew that he was boarding a street-car and was hurrying home to "get his stuff." He was sailing on the *West Star*. A fever, a tremendous rush of energy swept over him. Although he was perfectly still he seemed to be conscious of great movement in every part of his body and in his brain. The street-car barely seemed to move and he sat forward as if to urge it along. Sailing in two hours to be gone three months. A vision came to him of the cargo going into the hold. He was going with that cargo; he would see now where it went.

New strength in his legs carried him quickly up the stairs to his room. How strange it looked! He wondered how he had ever lived in it. He tied his old pants and wool shirt into a bundle. His good clothes for going ashore went into the travelling bag. A hurried note to his landlady:

"Dear Mrs Phelps, I am taking a sea voyage with a friend. I am sorry I could not give you more notice so that you could advertise the room. I will appreciate it if you will put the remainder of my things into my trunk and store it until my return which will be in about three months. I am leaving a week's rent in advance, and I will pay you for the trunk when I return."

He reread what he had written; it astounded him—frightened him. Three months was a long time. Anything could happen. Suppose he should get sick in a foreign port? He would be left. These thoughts and others raced through his brain as he sat at the little desk-like table. He looked at his watch. Time was passing. He bounded up, fears gone. In a moment he was in the street with his bundle and travelling-bag. He was escaping, looking back at the house. It was gone now and there was lightness in his step. In the street-car he stared straight ahead, his eyes turned inward.

"What on earth can be the matter with you, Mr Harrison? I've spoken to you twice."

It was like coming up after swimming under water. He looked at her and smiled quickly. It was that girl at the office.

"When you get back to the office to-morrow, will you do me a favour, Miss James?" The girl looked at him in surprise, she had never—in the workrooms of Pound, Henchman and Wineberg, Architects and Engineers—seen him look so boyish, so bursting with energy.

"Will you tell Mr Wineberg to-morrow that I have left for Europe for the purpose of studying architecture, and that I won't be able to figure those floor capacities for him or lay out those drains?"

He was aboard the ship now, changing his clothes. The steel box, the white painted walls decorated with rivet-heads in square patterns, iron bunks stacked up, this was to be his home for three months. It didn't look bad and he had a bunk right under a port-hole. The noise of speeded activity came through the open port and hurried his dressing.

On deck he was told to look for the Bos'n and soon everything was forgotten in the rush to learn new, unfamiliar work. How expert the others were and how clumsy he was, on the narrow steel ladders. Already his back was tired and his hands hurt, but inside he was conscious of a new freedom, a flowing power that drove him forward. There seemed to be energy in the very air.

Before he realized it they had pulled away from the pier, had dropped the tugs, and were in broad water under their own steam. A breathing spell now. Sailors were leaning against the rail, making comments in a low voice.

"All right, that's all for to-night." The Bos'n was letting them go. Harrison started aft, but as he passed under the boat-deck he heard Ramsey whistle and soon he was beside him at the radio shack. They stood together in the doorway, an occasional word passed back and forth; there seemed not much use for words. Two cigarettes were glowing points in the darkness.

The moon was small and high. It shone on miles and miles of water that glistened with silver dashes as far as you could see. Near the horizon there were great patches of unbroken silver.

A soft wind ruffled their hair as they turned and looked in the direction of the city and harbour. Nothing but a yellow glow was

THE HERMIT CRAB

to be seen. That way—behind them—were cluttered houses; ahead were the sea, the wind, and darkness. The ship had a deep-sea motion now and the air was strong with salt. Leaving Ramsey, Harrison went below. The fo'c'sle was deserted, but he could hear voices and laughing in the mess-room. He picked up his good suit to put it in the locker. He'd not be wearing it for a while now.

THE HERMIT CRAB

BY ROBERT HYDE

With the sound of the sea
 I fill my shell
 I fill my shell
 My shell
 My shell. . .
 The sea can sing so solemnly,
 Can sing so well,
 So well
 So well. . .
 The storm winds sing their songs to me,
 What they sing belongs to me,
 To me who dwell
 Below the swell,
 And with their songs I fill my shell
 Beneath the sea,
 Beneath the sea;
 And with their songs I fill my shell
 Below the swell
 Beneath the sea.

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MANAO TUPAPAU. BY PAUL GAUGUIN





Photograph by Druet

LA FUI TE. BY PAUL GAUGUIN



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BASQUE LAND

BY STEFAAN COUWENBERG

Translated From the Dutch by Bertus Hendrik Van Breemen.

"**W**HAT is it Piarrès says to the oxen?" asks Madeleine.
"He shouts, 'Bee-a!' That is Basque."

"Yes, Father."

If Piarrès had called "*Allez*," she would have understood. She has travelled with me in France. But the Basque shouts, "*Bee-a!*"

I have heard it many times to-day, for in this country it is the traditional day to move and scores of families have left their Basque dwellings—have sold them in exchange for powerful persuasive dollars and pounds. Heaped high, the antique wagons, on creaking disc wheels, have followed one after the other in long lines over the sunny roads; farther inland. The Basque is forced to move. Money will modernize the age-old houses, build garages, and make tennis-courts where the archaic pelota game used to be played against the white fronton wall on the far stretching *cancha*. Slowly the Basque is retiring; deeper inland, before land-hawks, always farther from the Silver Shore, the beautiful Côte d'Argent. A few to Mexico and the Argentine, to Brazil, and Canada. The smaller farms, unworthy the attention of Yankee or Anglo-Saxon, are bought by Spaniards, with pesetas, and local colour is in a way kept alive.

This day at noon I saw such a Spanish invasion. The going ones: sober, tall, sturdy Basques. He, swart; she, light; a baby, some calves, a few chickens and rabbits in baskets between the furniture, on the single ox-wagon. The man hallooed, "*Bee-a!*" The oxen pulled—their huge halter and yoke fastened to the horns with strong creaking belts. The old disc wheels grated painfully as the high loaded wagons swayed slowly downward over the stony mountain-path. A miniature exodus.

And again I observed that the Basque resembles the Israelite. Possibly they are of the same race; for the Basque looks somewhat Egyptian and I instinctively feel that he is Semitic.

Up the mountain-path between rosy ferns and the yellowish blooming *ajonje* shrubs the new owners climb. New their harness, trimmed with sheep-skin and glittering brass; new the wagon on rattling spoke wheels, new the vari-coloured quilt on top.

As types. The man: small, sturdy, Spanish, with strong well-formed face, purple holiday shirt, small stiff barret pressed against his round head. She: powdered, high-heeled, petite, deep red cheeks, thick locklets—holding a bird-cage. Chickens and rabbits in baskets between the furniture.

The Spaniard doesn't cry "*Bee-a-a*," but a light "*Caramba*." For the new wheels sink deep into the yard near the manure-pile. The little woman with the bird-cage looks down—grumbling. Then she smiles.

They have arrived. Somewhere far off in the valley it sounds twelve. A little later I see her tripping back and forth in her new yard like a nervous chicken, from the wagon to the door, from the door to the wagon. But to-night the chimney will smoke cheerfully and in the low-ceilinged, faintly lighted room spicy steam will rise from the favourite dish—pork and pimentoes. And the Spaniard, who is a pretty nice fellow, sits down and eats slowly, elbows resting on the wiggling table; and the little woman keeps pattering round, stopping now and then to pat the bright-coloured checked pillows. . . . Next year a baby, slightly dirtier and darker eyed than the one that died, will rest in the lap of the petite powdered Spanish woman. Her long brass ear-rings will tinkle joyously in the feeble lamplight. But I must write about the Basques.

The exotic Basque people, who will soon be only a relic—as yet, living, loving, labouring. Another century and the pure Euscarian blood will have outpoured itself among that of the younger surrounding nations—the race withered, exhausted by tuberculosis and all the other maladies common to ancient, isolated races.

One of the singular things is the language. Professor Uhlenbeck sees a relationship with the Caucasian group. The grammar has traits common to Chinese it is said.

I don't know much about this. I do know that this day early in January I got up and greedily inhaled the stimulus of healthy air flowing through my open window from whose sill a winter rose waved meekly; while far off the mountains of Spain, rose gold-

brown to the clearing sky. I know that then I heard my neighbour, the boy Gachaurra—his voice high and fleeting like the fading gold of old idols—blithely sing:

*"Ene izar maitia
Ene charmagarria
Ichilic zur' ikhustera
Jiten nitreuxi leihcra . . ."*

He sang his love-song full and free for he thought himself unobserved. His father, Manech, like his serene mother, the Etcheco-Andrea, was sleeping yet in the high four-post bed. After an hour, when they are drinking their morning coffee near the fireside in the living-room and Gachaurra is binding branches near the front door, he will softly, devoutly sing: "*Agur Maya*," ave Maria, mother of Jesus. For that his slender Maitia his beloved sang on Christmas Eve when all thought of love-making in the platan-bush behind the Elissaldea was far . . . far. That night all that Maitia's big almond eyes saw was incense floating around many candles. Glowing like a mystic flower in a dark golden nimbus, so Gachaurra watched Maitia stare at the Holiest of Holies.

Each Christmas night little lights descend from the mountains to the valley. In the dark open portico where holy candle-light sparsely penetrates and there is the faint sound of many voices, the unlighted lanterns with their copper-rimmed glass stand humbly waiting. On following nights they will be put to common use, when at milking-time their yellow shine will light bulky backs or glow softly on the mother of a wailing calf.

Always on New Year's Eve we are serenaded by our neighbour the old Improvisator and his choir of young men, singing at our door with the soft accompaniment of *chulas* and *chirulas*, small harps and flutes. The choir sings the warmly witty nightingale tune, Chorietan Burazagi and the naughty Salvatore, closing with the tender *Plañu Niz*. Next, the Improvisator's voice is heard, high like that of Gachaurra and all Basque singers. In pure mellow playful Euscarian he praises maliciously the women and girls of the neighbourhood, calling them "*Loriac*" which means flowers. "Blooming but lightly fading ones"—he salutes them in the vari-

ous inflections of his "*voix flutée*," the choir taking up the old refrain which sounds like a Russian drinking-song. Also praise of my wife is sung by the Improvisator, who declares that she is "*izar zilareskga*," silver star. For he is full of appreciation of the kindness wherewith she all year round has greeted him in the Basque language and has taught our little one to wish him good-night with the words "*agur piartsume*." Even the beauty of the Spanish woman, our neighbour, he exalts, though the fairest in the eyes of the Basque is she whose well-formed neck rests on a strong body crowned by a wealth of blond hair, set off by dark eyebrows.

After a day of laughter and kisses, work is taken up with force and vim. The corn has been in the barn since November; the winter rye is sown. But the soil has to be kept loose by means of the *bêche* for after one day of heavy rain the warm winter sun makes it as hard as clay.

And now hunters go out after birds and foxes, or, high on the mountains, after falcons and flocks of migrating wood-pigeons—the light grey *palombes*—caught by hundreds with large nets while flying in groups.

Now also it is slaughter time, connected with which are old traditions and venerations. According to custom the next neighbour does the butchering; the stately oldest Andrea prepares the carefully spiced *farcies*; after which, the traditional meal ceremony. On the snow-white, dark-blue striped damask cloth stand octagonal platters filled with Old Testamentic food. The women, sober and dignified as always, hardly touch the food, but keep serving. The men are stirred by ancient instinct, and long solid jaws attack great quantities of highly-seasoned food: chickens; veal cutlets with spiced gravy; *purées* of tomatoes and onions; baked *farcies* with garlic; stewed cabbage; and for dessert, whipped cream with nougat, and heavy Basque tart filled with pear-sauce or honey. Wine is not lacking, neither is brandy; the table-talk is spiced and animated, but not sugared.

Such is the Basque: a barbarian under his mask of calm dignity. But he also is the lonesome singer. "*Ene izar maitia*," he sings dreamily at dawn . . . "be greeted, dear one, my little star . . ."

And in the window of his sleeping-room, as in the times of Julian, he grows a basil and a lone heliotrope.

AT GLENAN CROSS

BY L. A. G. STRONG

WEST WIND

O white austerity,
Less cloud than flying air,
Light more than bird:

Under this sky how lost
The word that dowers form
Or prisons quality:

For what we see we know,
Yet know not with our eyes;
Cannot discern

Bird, light, or cloud
In the pure vision blown
Over our heads, and gone.

HAUNTED GLEN

This is the glen that ghosted me
Under the eye of day.
I had lost my road by Loch Nan Uamh,
And asked the way

Of an old man mending tarry nets.
He gave it me, and then
"Dance to your shadow, lad," he grinned,
"Passing the glen."

'Dance to your shadow, lad,' is a song,
But I understood no more.

AT GLENAN CROSS

Light rose the glen a mile beyond
That graceful shore.

The sun stepped gallantly between
Its tall and fingered trees,
Like virgins, leaning. Half the length
I trod at ease,

Then I remembered, and was cold,
For my feet struck no sound,
And where I stood no shadow fell
Upon the ground.

O, how I ran, I'm not ashamed,
To seek my human own
On ground that rang and verified
Breathless ten stone!

DROWNÉD HONOUR

The yellow weed like Judas' beard
Waves in the ebb and flow
Of treacherous seas too little feared
Three dead hours ago:

That yellow beard that wagged and mocked
Though first it promised fair:
Then promise-ridden, halter-shocked,
Stuck in the bleak air

Lost and ignoble, as a weed
Left sprawling by the tide.
The whole world's guilty of this deed:
And where shall Honour bide

When all our rocks are furred and flawed
With yellow beards like these,
And there is Treachery abroad
Heedless as the sea's?

THE END OF THE WORLD

BY ELIZABETH COATSWORTH

THE sun was shining without a cloud, setting all the water in the bay to shimmering, and polishing the arching breakers till they shone like glass. Through the cracks of the wharf small sparkles of light were flashing, and the shadow of Grace Hubbard's hat on the pages of her open book seemed hardly a shadow at all. She sat drawn up on a box with her shoulder to the beach, squinting her eyes at the words, and now and then marking one with a pencil. From time to time she looked up to make sure that none of the boats were fouling their lines. There was the big forty-foot Sea-Gull painted grey and white and new this season; next to it rode the Amanda, small but the most trustworthy of the fleet; then came the green hull of the Grace Darling, and the narrow Flash which Mr Hubbard always told prospective parties was not meant for fishing but only for speed; and then the three fifteen-footers: the Sea-Lion, the Sea-Horse, and the Season. When Mr Hubbard first told Grace the name of the last launch she had thought it very clever, but after a few weeks it seemed to her silly, and now she was ashamed of it and felt embarrassed when any one read it aloud. She would have liked to ask her father to change that one name, but she hardly knew what to say. It was difficult to make her father understand how she felt about many things. He would not let her dress like the other girls on the beach. After her swim she was not to pull a pair of white duck sailor trousers over her bathing-suit, and stick a yachting-cap on her head as so many of them did. She was not even allowed to get a Japanese coolie coat, for they cost six dollars—"too expensive," said Mr Hubbard, "and anyway it isn't business-like. When you've had your swim, get into your clothes and don't hang around half-dressed like a lot of these young idiots."

"But if I want to go in swimming again later, Father? You know the water's so cold you can't stay in long," Grace insisted.

"If a swim's worth taking, it's worth getting into a bathing-suit for," was all that Mr Hubbard had to say about that. But he

had still something to say about a beach umbrella for the end of the wharf.

"I'd look nice, wouldn't I? sitting under a thing like that?" he asked, "and you, a sensible-looking girl"—he hesitated for a fraction of a second—"with glasses—"

Grace would have died rather than say another word. She sat on her box and shaded her book with her hat—although her father had suggested that she use his black umbrella—and kept her shoulder to the beach and the groups that lounged along it, and broke away to throw themselves into the breakers or play with great rubber balls. She took turns with her father: one sat inside the stand on the boardwalk behind a counter displaying brightly-coloured drinks in small bottles, ice-cream cones, and all those candies and crackers which come wrapped in transparent papers and sell for five cents; while the other sat on the wharf, a living reminder to those seeking their pleasure, that here might be rented launches and live bait by the hour or the day.

As Grace waited, slowly turning over the pages of her book, she was far away in another land by another sea. The sun was warm on her shoulders and would grow warmer as the morning breeze died down. She knew that no one was likely to come on business at that time in the morning, and the first of the fishing parties would probably not be back before one o'clock at the earliest. She could count on two hours to herself uninterrupted by the embarrassing problems that faced her at the stand, problems as to which passers-by she knew or didn't know, and what constituted knowing a person anyway, and who should speak first. Here on the wharf she was by herself with nothing to bother her.

It was therefore with a sense of interruption that she heard the sound of a step on the planks and turned to say good-morning to a customer. She thought she had not seen him before although his tan showed he had been much around the water. There was nothing noticeable in his appearance except perhaps the pale blue of his eyes looking out from his brown face, and later she noticed that his forehead showed white where it was protected by the brim of his hat, so she knew he had got his tan in boats rather than by swimming. He said he wanted a small launch and she went with him while he picked one out. The Sea-Lion would do, and could he rent bait and tackle? She took him over to the shed at the end

of the wharf, unlocking the door upon a strong smell of fish. While she brought out the bait he asked her what she was studying.

If only he had said "reading"!

She told him it was a French book, she was trying to skip a grade, and she liked the book anyway. It was about Corsica and was very exciting.

"I can speak some Spanish," the man said. "I just string the words along anyhow, but they make out to understand me. I get along."

Then he asked if he should pay now or when he brought the boat back, pulling out as he spoke a purse that seemed full of bills. She said either way and he said, all right, he'd pay when he got back. Then they could tell how many hours he'd had it. A shadow slid over the wharf and the man remarked, "That's a big gull." He seemed to look at everything he saw, and study it, and come to some decision about it.

While he pulled in the launch, she stood on the wharf watching him put in his bait and tackle. "Well, so long," he remarked, slipping down into the Sea-Lion so smoothly that it scarcely rocked. He cast loose, turned the engine over, and backed from the wharf. As he headed the boat out for the sea, he glanced over his shoulder at her, and raised one hand high in a gesture of farewell. She responded and returned to her book.

The morning went as usual. Grace finished twenty pages of Colomba, received and helped moor the launches of two or three returning fishing parties, exchanged perfunctory remarks with her clients upon their luck, and spelled her father during his lunch hour. At about two o'clock her father, whose turn it was at the wharf, drifted back to the stand, expecting no one for the time being and bored with the solitude of his newspaper. Grace was serving a group of bathers led by a stout woman apparently dressed in nothing but a pink sweater and a child's straw hat, when she heard someone asking her father if he had charge of the wharf. Mr Hubbard said yes, he guessed so. "I just wondered, mister, if a gentleman, a friend of mine, took out a boat sometime about eleven-twelve o'clock? I was to meet him and couldn't get down here. He'd be a kind of medium-size fellow with light blue eyes and wearing a brown suit."

"I don't remember any such party," said Mr Hubbard.

"He had an anchor tattooed on his hand," continued the man.

"No, I guess he didn't come down here this morning."

The other started to turn away. Grace could bear it no longer. Her father couldn't expect to see everything that went on from the stand when she was tending the boats. On an uncontrollable impulse she left her own customers.

"Excuse me!" she called after the man.

At first he did not hear her but at the second call he turned and surprised her by the flatness of his face.

"It must have been your friend who took the Sea-Lion this morning about eleven. I noticed his eyes."

"Was he alone?" asked the man.

"Yes. I thought he was going out late."

"Which way was he headed for?"

No, she hadn't noticed that and he hadn't said what time he'd be back.

"Well, thanks," said the man and continued along the walk.

The afternoons at the stand were apt to be busy. There were more people than in the mornings, lounging by in pairs or groups, carrying rugs, parasols, and cushions. Grace grew tired of watching them. She knew many of them by sight and had seen them running with conscious springiness along the sand at low tide, or resting sprawled for hours on their stomachs in the shade of their beach umbrellas. In the late afternoon her father went again to the wharf to meet the return of the Dixieland, the Santa Anita, and the Fisherman's Luck. His figure came and went on the dock, going to the sentry-box storehouse for supplies, and climbing down into the returned launches, swabbing out the stains of fish blood, filling the tanks with gasoline, and throwing overboard remnants of picnic lunches. The air grew cooler, the sun drew a red column of light across the water, and turned the churning of the waves to rose-colour. The reflections on the sand were now green. With the increasing lateness the tide of people turned back from the beach and began ebbing into the hotels and cottages. Most of the parasols and bright colours were gone. The beach was like a garden of morning-glories that close with the going down of the sun.

Grace put on a sweater and found time to open The Saturday Evening Post. At six her father came back to the stand.

"Are the boats all in?" she asked.

"All except the Sea-Lion," said her father. "Did he pay?"

Grace went back over the morning in her mind:

"No, he was going to pay when he came in."

"Then we'd better hang around a while longer," said her father. "You go and get something to eat." Grace brought him back a hot-dog sandwich and a cup of coffee. The sky and sea darkened and all the lights of the town came out behind them. For a long time a bar of watermelon pink lay across the west. The evening star made a path like a small moon. Sometimes they thought they heard the chug-chug of a motor-boat, but it never grew any nearer and they decided that they must be mistaken. By seven everyone had left the beach except some boys who had built a small fire and were cooking over it.

"There's no use waiting any longer," said Mr Hubbard about eight o'clock. "You say this man acted used to a boat?"

"Yes," said Grace who felt chilled and dreary.

"It hasn't been rough," her father went on, "and on the other hand it wouldn't be worth the risk to try to run a small launch up this coast. There's not another harbour for fifty miles. Did he look honest? I can't say I thought much of his friend."

"Yes," said Grace again, and then amended it, "well, maybe not—he looked exciting."

"I'll speak to the sheriff on the way back," decided Mr Hubbard, "better safe than sorry. And to-morrow I'll cruise around a little and see if his gasoline tank maybe sprung a leak. He's got a good anchor and a night out won't hurt him."

However, it was not Mr Hubbard but an Italian fisherman who found the Sea-Lion in the fog, early next morning, drifting with the tide. What he discovered in it seemed so important to him that he gave up his day's fishing to tow the boat back to the town. There it caused a babble of excitement that spread from group to group up and down the beach—"in twelve places," "had been dead hours," "no, no one knows." Somewhere on that wide expanse of ocean, a man had been killed, when, or by whom, no one had an idea. Some inclined to the theory of robbery, referring to the thick purse he was said to have carried; others thought the crime had a look of some more personal enmity about it; the larger number believed the dead man had been a bootlegger killed by hi-jackers.

There were no letters in his pockets, and no name on his clothing to identify him. The whole matter was a mystery. It took hold of everyone's imagination and for the rest of the day no one could look at the serene curve of the ocean without trying to imagine the scene—the solitude—the rocking boats—

Grace cried and cried. It seemed as though she could never come to the end of her tears. Mr Hubbard thought it natural that she should cry a little after having a thing like that happen in one of their own boats, but her grief appeared immoderate.

"What's the matter?" he asked at last patting her shoulder once or twice. "You'd never seen him before, had you?"

But Grace went on crying, and she herself could not have said why everything seemed so finished for her—so like the end of the world.

SONG OF THE TREES

BY YVOR WINTERS

Belief is blind. Bees scream!
Gongs! Thronged with light!

And I take
into light, hold light,
in light I live, I,
pooled and broken here,
to watch, to wake above you.

Sun
no seeming but savage
simplicity breaks running
for an aeon, stops, shuddering, here.

PARIS LETTER

May, 1928

I MUST apologize for being obliged to date this Paris Letter from Timbuktu. Having in fact devoted my winter to the study of the black race, in five months I have been to the French, Dutch, American, and English Antilles, the island of Guinea, the Sudan, the Niger, and the Ivory Coast. As to Liberia, I was so tired, and it was so hot, that I remained on board, without venturing to leave the boat. From Harlem to Timbuktu, from Port-au-Prince to the Gold Coast, I have visited the tribe of Ham—by pirogue, hammock, camel, horse, auto, and even by rail, for modern Africa has railways as direct as those of America, and much finer roads. But everyone knows the vogue which the blacks are enjoying now in Paris and London; accordingly, I did not have the impression of being exiled. What is Timbuktu but an older Harlem, a Harlem where one retires and rises early? And there are fewer "plantations" and "cocoanut groves" in Guinea than at Montmartre, and they bring in less to the settlers. In Paris, *Nigger Heaven* by Carl Van Vechten has just appeared in a French translation, completing the world career of this excellent book. Philippe Soupault has published *Le Nègre*, the Parisian autobiography of an American negro in Montmartre, touched by the grace of surrealism, and in love with a prostitute named Europe. (This unhappy Europe is being greatly badgered in literature by the partisans of the black race, the yellow race, or the white race in the New World; it were time that someone in the United States itself came to her rescue.)

And nevertheless a young Europe does exist. The present Renaissance is undeniable, but it can best become conscious of itself outside of Europe—just as, a hundred years ago, the man who was most qualified to understand the world rising to replace the *ancien régime* was Chateaubriand, because he had observed the situation from America. In *Jaune, Bleu, Blanc*, Valéry Larbaud continues to give us the benefit of his calm wisdom, competent to derive from all sources—be they woman or philology—a refined and so to speak hand-made pleasure which is even now a rarity in our age of mechanical specialization, and which will in time become the

last strange legacy of an epoch that had known gentler ways of living. Less formal than *Amants*, *Heureux Amants*, which appeared in 1924, the stories of this new work by Larbaud are more like the preliminary sketches for books, like incomplete novels in which things are indicated and suggested, and allowed to remain in the limbo of a sensitive mentality.

Another evasion is *Vasco*, the first book and novel of a new writer, Marc Chadourne, whose *début* must be ranked with that of Julian Green as the finest promise of recent years. Chadourne learned his craft from Conrad and Somerset Maugham. He is indebted to them for his art as a narrator and his sense of mystery; but he can claim as his own the accent of profound gravity, of sincere and restrained anguish, which marks the true atmosphere of the book. We do find this tendency towards evasion, this treatment of adventure as an ultimate end, in the whole generation to which Chadourne belongs—now in its early thirties; but none of the others who have attempted to express it could approach the mastery which this young author has derived from silence, exile, and gloomy meditation—"a sundry contemplation of my travels," as Jacques says in *As You Like It*. *M Pierre Humbourg*, in *Escales*, unfolds his somewhat ordinary plot with the western shore of Africa as a setting—from Marseilles to the Congo. *M Humbourg*, who has often made this voyage, describes the life on a freighter with a remarkable force and precision. *Continent Perdu*, by *M Henri Hoppenot*, expresses the same attitude under a more lyrical form, the adventure here being rigorously interior and poetic.

. . . "*continent perdu*
sous les sables de l'âme,
l'Asie intérieure
qui la découvrira?"

After this abstract conflict, this journey through the soul, where the station or the steamer are but symbols, we turn to a writer who, to my mind, has not yet secured the recognition that he merits: *G. Ribemont-Dessaignes*. His *Bar du Lendemain* contains pages which make their author one of the most powerful satirists of our times. It is a constant source of astonishment to me that in an epoch so picturesque as our own, where contrasts of tragedy and

comedy are prevalent, where the medley of races and the confusion of customs, traditions, and individual experiences are so pronounced, there are not more satirists. I use the term in its "eighteenth-century" connotation. With his destructiveness, his flair for scandal, and his familiarity with all the audacities which the advanced schools have claimed for literature since the war, will Ribemont-Dessaignes be tempted to duplicate the career of a Swift?

From America let us return to 60° north latitude, where a new writer, M Bedel, tells us the adventures of Jérôme, his hero, the conventional type of clever, impertinent Frenchman, fancier of women and false sentimentalist. This skilful and very amusing book has received the Prix Goncourt; it is a brilliant beginning. But we have ceased to count such; these brilliant beginnings, these flashing starts, these sudden appearances of new stars greeted by salvos of publicity are a sign of the time, and one which I believe to be found now in all countries. The public falls into line; criticism despite its old age follows stormily; everything is prepared and the *débutant* has but to install himself in his new-made glory. But that is where the difficulty begins. . . . If the Académie Goncourt, anxious not to appear outmoded, had not given its prize to M Bedel, I believe that it would have crowned either Vasco, of which I have spoken above, or *Les Hommes de la Route* by M Chamson, a beautiful and serious story, a kind of novelized poem in prose, the monograph of a highway from its birth to the moment when it is opened to traffic, detailing the transformations which it entails in the region through which it passes and in the lives of the inhabitants and the workers who have constructed it.

L'Amour à l'Américaine had been attracting the attention of the French public, with their growing interest in the various modes of sensibility overseas, when M Bernard Faÿ published *Faites Vos Jeux*. Whatever the talent of American authors may be, the best of them are so American, and are so little concerned with explaining their intentions to the rest of the world (either through scorn of composition or horror of generalizations) that, far from enabling us to understand the customs which they describe, they make these landscapes of the mind still more obscure to the eyes of an uninformed foreign public by adding the opacity of their own personalities. Thus each country must finally look to its own

writers for assistance in understanding neighbouring nations. In this respect, the United States could not have a better interpreter among the French than M Bernard Faÿ, who knows the country and loves it. Each of M Faÿ's stories bears the name of a game of cards, from the most childish to the most complex. The style of the young professor, who here tries his hand at fiction for the first time, is pliant, smooth, and witty. His characters are chosen principally from the *milieu* of the large American universities. They are drawn with accuracy and sensitiveness, a sensitiveness which is new and fresh, and which the cynical and sophisticated of Paris would be quick to find absurd if M Bernard Faÿ did not possess, along with his ability as a story-teller, the art of affecting the emotions. M Julian Green, who has gained rapid fame in the United States, and whose international fortune I am happy to have predicted in these pages when his first book appeared, has just issued *Les Clefs de la Mort*, a long story, somewhat Russian in tone, filled with mysterious beauty.

Le Microbe de l'Or by M Ivan Goll is a character study on the theme of avarice; it is an excellent novel, refurbished with all the recent acquisitions of German expressionism. I also advise reading the *Merlin* of M Jean Prévost, published by the N. R. F., a swift audacious picture of post-war love, treated with the grace of a *Crébillon* or of a *Restif de la Bretonne*. I could not recommend too highly the *Petite Histoire des Juifs* which MM Jean and Jérôme Tharaud have just published with Plon. These writers, it will be remembered, have devoted the greater part of their novels to Jewish problems. They were recently in Asia Minor—and will soon be in New York, where I promise them a rich harvest. Their little history is purely a book of vulgarization; it is the lightest and most entertaining reading that one could imagine, without any of the dryness that usually goes with such overhasty *résumés*. The pages on the schisms of Israel, on Mendelssohn, the Zohar, and the false prophets, are extremely attractive.

Much has been written on the Russian refugees abroad, particularly at Paris. The temptation is great, since the novelist sees beneath his very eyes a wealth of completed characters and perfected situations. No one has brought to this theme the ease and craftsmanship of the young novelist, J. Kessel, a naturalized Frenchman who is Russian by birth. His *Nuits de Prince*, with its excellent

title, was one of the best-sellers of the winter. Still on the subject of Russia, or at least of Russian mentality, I should mention the very appealing pages in which Feodor Chaliapine, the celebrated singer, recounts his youth and childhood; I do not know whether this book¹ has appeared in the United States, but it is much liked in France. Finally, whoever desires to penetrate the contemporary realm of the Soviets should read *Russie 1927* by M Fabre Luce. The brilliant young author of *La Victoire* was known for his left-wing views, in this respect even setting the fashion for some of his generation. Many of the younger men waited to learn of his opinion before declaring themselves on Bolshevism, as they recognized his fairness and progressiveness and his ability to face realities. As in our own case, M Fabre Luce went to Soviet Russia with no prepossessions hostile to the new order, and without attachments of any sort to Czarism; yet his book is clearly unfavourable to the Soviets. The author observes that Bolshevism has not lived up to its promises, in the sphere of politics, ideology, art, or literature. First having incurred the condemnation of the moderate factions by his earlier books, and now in his latest volume severing his connexions with the extreme left, M Fabre Luce has maintained a courageous attitude which does honour to his probity and his judgement.

In art, I should mention a new *Histoire de l'Art Chinois*, the work of a sinologist of good reputation, M Soulié de Morant. He is known for his translations of Chinese novels and for his Chinese literature, the best that we possess in France. M Jacques Guenne, in *Portraits d'Artistes*, speaks with competence and authority of great living artists such as Vlaminck, Matisse, Kisling, et cetera. I recommend this book as an excellent initiation into the art of our time. A taste for old travel documents is developing along with the interest in maps, ancient charts, sextants, and astrolabes. Of course, this is more frequently the province of antiques than literature, but until recently in France we have been granted few re-editions of early voyages. There was no collection comparable, for example, to the collection MacKluyt. We should also praise the efforts of the young scholar, M Duchâtre, whose valuable book, *L'Imagerie Populaire*, I have mentioned previously.² His *Voyages*

¹ Pages from *My Life*; reviewed in *THE DIAL*, January 1928, page 71.

² *THE DIAL*, June 1926, page 508.

Anciens, though an edition *de luxe*, is of moderate price, and is already much sought after.

La République de Professeurs by M Albert Thibaudet, the foremost critic in France, is not the work of a literary critic, but of a political one. It is a book of the highest quality, so deep and sound in its thinking that it leaves nothing more of importance to be said on its subject. The author's great independence and caustic eloquence disclose in him the savour of pure French provincial soil. Though Thibaudet has to his credit many years of teaching in Central or Nordic Europe, he has preserved his fine Burgundian traits in all their sharpness and strength. Since the *Politiques et Moralistes du XIX-ème Siècle* of Faguet, no one has given us such pungent pages of political exegesis.

In biography I should mention the *Alfred de Vigny* of M Paul Brach, and especially the *Itinéraire de Paris à Buenos Ayres* by Jean Jacques Brousson, which is the sequel to the *Anatole France en Pantoufles* published with so much success at New York. Let us say forthwith that we even prefer this book to the preceding one. It is better than biography; it is the creation of a type as true and as developed as those of our best novels. With all respect to the illustrious author of the *Jardin d'Epicure*, we may venture to say that none of the novelist's own characters, which are often as dry as catalogue cards, will have for posterity the swarming, crafty, egoistical, and sensual intensity of Anatole France himself as portrayed by Brousson.

PAUL MORAND

BOOK REVIEWS

"THE POSSESSED SEA-CAPTAIN"

HENRY HUDSON. By Llewelyn Powys. Illustrated with one plate and maps. 8vo. 213 pages. Harper and Brothers. \$4.

THERE is in the writing of this book a quality which suggests both the sea and the excitement of discovery—a kind of Protean envelopment. All sorts of far-brought things appear on its pages—the Czar Ivan the Terrible and the Virgin Queen; the mermaid who was seen from Hudson's ship by two sailors and whose appearance was recorded by the master-mariner; the Indians along the New York river who let fly the arrow which killed John Colman "at the hour when the duck come down to feed on the wild celery"; the horn, "perfectly straight, some five or six feet long, made of ivory, hollow and heavy and marvellously decorated with natural spiral twists," picked up on the barren seashore of Vaigach, taken to be a unicorn's horn and the finding of which was an argument in favour of there being a way out of "the sayde Orientall Ocean into our Septentrionall seas"; there are the tankards and the books and the six-holed German flute which were left by William Barentz in Nova Zembla and recovered in our time. These curious glimpses which we are given on almost every page of Henry Hudson suggest the teeming sea and also that moment in history when the earth and its seas seemed to be filled with treasures which merchants and adventurous captains and lucky mariners might possess themselves of. It was in the first hundred and fifty years after Columbus' sailing. Columbus, as I have heard Stefansson say, planted an idea that was to engage the minds of merchants and mariners for another three hundred years. If by sailing through the Western you came into the Eastern Seas, then, by sailing through the Northern you could come into the Southern Seas. The whole balance of geographical knowledge was upset by Columbus; all sorts of speculations were seriously taken, and the minds of European men were being filled with the idea of discovery.

According to Llewelyn Powys it is to John Cabot that the honour must be given for having first suggested the idea that a short passage to the East might be found by way of the North. The idea immediately became invested with a sort of mysticism—the proximity to the Pole, "that place of greatest dignity on earth," would bring warmth and relief from the hardships of Arctic sailing. And then, in a way that brings home to us how far-spread was the adventure that resulted in such discoveries as Hudson's, the writer of Henry Hudson tells us about John Cabot, "a merchant of Bristol, by birth a Genoese and by adoption a Venetian":

"As a young man, he had visited Mecca and had spoken to certain Arab traders, newly arrived from across the desert, who, as they unloaded from off the galled backs of their tired camels bales of oriental merchandise, had told him stories of the fabulous wealth of the places from which they had come, stories that had inflamed his imagination and had set him meditating upon the possible existence of a more expedient way of bringing to Europe those treasured commodities."

Henry Hudson was the real hero of the quest for this short passage to the orient. As Llewelyn Powys reveals him, Hudson was by no means the bluff and tough serving-mariner of the merchants of Amsterdam and London. He was, before everything else, a visionary:

"The finding of a passage to the East had become for him an intellectual obsession. For this reason he not only had spent his time trying to interest the merchant financiers in his schemes, but had also passed many hours with learned cartographers and geographical students, thumbing maps and poring over old tattered marine manuscripts."

He was drawn to Peter Plancius, who apparently, "detested nothing so much, both in the physical and metaphysical world, as vague outlines."

"Ever since his arrival in Holland, two matters had occupied his attention, the discovery of a northern passage to the Indies, and

the refutation of the doctrines of that great man, the son of a common cutler, Jacobus Arminius, the founder of the Remonstrant Church, who, in direct contradiction of that 'Saint Calvin of Geneva,' was inclined in the field of theology, 'to limit the range of the unconditional decrees of God.' "

Although he was one of the most daring and persistent of the mariners of that great era of discovery, he had weaknesses:

"It is evident that Hudson was not what is generally known as a strong man, was not, that is to say, a captain whose self-confidence was vigorous enough to dominate unruly spirits in the fore-castle."

It was this lack of power of domination in the man, a lack which adds much to the human interest of his story, that brought him to his pitiful end.

The story of his third and fourth voyages occupies half Llewelyn Powys' book. "Rubens was a young man of thirty-three, Rembrandt an unwitting baby, Teniers had not yet been born," when Hudson started from Holland on his third voyage, the voyage that was to bring him up the river that flows into New York harbour. This part of his voyage Mr Powys describes with great relish. It is an idyll coming before the tragedy of the fourth voyage. We see Hudson in friendly relations with the Indians of the place:

"One likes to think of Hudson thus, indulgent, good-humoured, sitting on a bulrush mat, at ease in the simple habitation of these people, the memory of whom haunts our minds whenever we escape from the shrill importunity of modern American life into the wild woods. They have vanished, gone from the mountains, gone from the forests, but never can we see a solitary rock, moss-grown and secluded, under the wintry trees, but our imagination is touched with a whisper of their presence."

The last attempt of Hudson to realize his dream and the dream of so many men of that time, the dream of "a deep, wide, warm channel, an imperial waterway to Cathay," has, in Llewelyn Powys' narrative of it, the interest of a well-organized piece of drama. There against the background of granite and ice, are men

facing a desperate scarcity of bread; there is Hudson more and more convinced that he is about to enter the passage that leads into the warm seas, and there are the men who refuse to go further with him—that depraved young man, Greene; Juet, the old man filled with resentments against Hudson, who gives heart to the mutineers; and the pietistical Abacuk Prickett, once the serving-man of Sir Dudley Digges; and Philip Staffe, the carpenter who chose rather to commit himself to God's mercy and "for the love of the Master go down into the shallop, than with such villaines to accept of likelier hopes." What follows the mutiny is an epilogue, but an epilogue that is of the greatest historical interest. But when we have read the document which Llewelyn Powys has discovered, the document that records the acquittal of the mutineers, our minds go back to that last glimpse of Hudson:

"And now, the shallop still being in tow, they stood out of the ice; and when they were nearly out of it, 'they cut her head fast from the stern of the ship,' and with top-sails up, steered away into an open sea, leaving their captain and his son, with seven poor sailors, abandoned and exposed, 'without food, drink, fire, clothing, or other necessities,' in that great unexplored bay. There he sat in the tiny boat, dressed 'in a motley gown,' the possessed sea-captain who had sailed to the North, and sailed to the East, and sailed to the West in his endeavour to find a passage through the ice-bound ramparts of the planet itself. There he sat, this dreamer, in his coat of many colours, until to the eyes of the mutineers, who watched the shallop grow smaller and smaller in the wake of their stolen vessel, he became a mote, a speck, a nothing, lost to sight on the unresting waves of the wharfless wilderness that had been by him, so resolutely, so desperately discovered."

Henry Hudson is a book that is full of interests that were stirring in the world, and the sort of characters that were to the fore when William Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest*.

PADRAIC COLUM

BIOLOGICAL PANTHEISM

THE CAUSE OF EVIL, Or the Values of Nature and the Values of Religion. By I. G. Bartholomew. 8vo. 194 pages. Heath Cranton, Ltd. 6s.

SCRUTINY of the inscrutable should not be easy, and one could suppose the present volume not very readily written, for its subject seems nothing less than the general significance of life, set forth in a perspective of modern biology and psychology. In so inclusive an enterprise merits must obviously be more general or personal than immediately specific, and this is the case. Now naïve, now trenchant, but constantly ambitious and courageous, the book is evidently more than a register of commonplaces. And yet quite as clearly it is not a book of discoveries, for the ordinarily informed reader must already be amply aware of most of the facts it indicates (and sometimes doubtful of the bearing given them) while a principal guarantee of the more important views presented is that they have been long and well held in warrantable quarters, though not till now, perhaps, framed in so broadly biological a rationale. The principle of the continuity of men, for instance—"ye are members one with another"—is surely no new or undeclared idea. Yet it possibly has not before been specifically related to the biological concept of symbiosis, or the latter signalized as an instance of the principle that neither man nor animal can be utterly self-contained and live. And again we seem to have heard often enough that the life of goodness is to be desired not for its supposed rewards henceforth, but simply because it is, here and now, the most consistently happy life—a life such that once we have discovered it we will love no other. But we are doubtless not so familiar with the notion that this happiness of virtue is the biological happiness of adaptation, of a perfect ecology, of protoplasm harmonized within and without. And if such subsidiary axioms of the essay are not especially novel, except in setting, neither is the chief thesis. This thesis is simply that the only secure footing of human values, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, lies in the values of nature. Our noblest motives are race-wrought, our highest experiences simply the finer passages of the general sentience within us, and within which we are. Reli-

gions and philosophies live and serve men only as they are true to the facts of man's being as a part of nature.

The reader should not, perhaps, anticipate too much pragmatic application in such a biologism as this. If premises are not distinct conclusions can be interesting and suggestive, but neither very specific nor very coercive. And while biology and psychology may eventually prove sciences of infinite import, they are obviously, in their current phase, insufficiently developed and integral to supply premises for extended inference, except as such inference is recognized to be proximate indeed. This doubtless is the attitude in which the essay is to be read, for the author specifically deprecates "completeness" in systems, and implies that his own effort will tend toward the establishment of a point of view rather than the elaboration of categories. At all events this is the aspect of the essay in which its strength is seen. It is discursive rather than precise, and establishes its directions less by logical execution or scientific sophistication than by simple duration of earnestness.

It does, indeed, establish its directions—and not merely by earnestness, but by a certain moderation of mind, which does a good deal to support the particular themes presented—presented but not impregnably established—such dicta as the too meagrely developed opinion that the cause of evil is "mismanagement, lack of adaptation," or the theory that man is not yet fully human and to become so must learn the complete use of his now largely fallow brain, or the truly golden view that as individuals we take ourselves too seriously. It is not simply that in this essay on moral philosophy *via* biology there is an abundance of intelligent insistence upon the wonder as well as the mechanics of the machinery of being, upon the sweep and scope of spirit throughout the world of life, an insistence sufficiently in contrast with the moral and intellectual destitution of the behaviorist-mechanist mythologies. It is that there is present also a general fund of sense, grown up perhaps out of such honourable and substantial considerations as the old one that our human values and virtues perhaps do not urgently require derivative justification; that it may be unimportant, except pedagogically, whether they are from heaven or the mnemonic protoplasm of our animal predecessors. The point is they are here—self-evident, self-authenticating. "We have recognized," says the author, justly, "not invented our ideals."

CHARLES K. TRUEBLOOD

THE SEVENTH HILL

THE SEVENTH HILL. By Robert Hillyer. 10mo. 85 pages. The Viking Press. \$1.50.

THERE are two difficulties in reviewing volumes of verse, two opposite dangers, either of which is absurd: the system of generalities and the system of samples. In the first case, a review becomes nothing but a clothes-line for airing theories in the spring or autumn; in the second, the poet is cut up into specimen cross-sections for the microscope. In either case the reviewer makes a fool of himself, or his reader. Poets, too, are apt to fret in the one instance, feeling that telescopes or opera-glasses would be more appropriate. With a first volume, again, a reviewer can always prophesy or patronize—according to personal relations or digestion. But this is Mr Hillyer's seventh book of verse, and even for an artist, he must feel himself secure. He has not exploded any bombs of unexpected form or substance—maturity achieved and the mould of manner having determined the shape and content of his work some time since.

Charm and ease are there, and all the qualities which have won shrewd praise in England and America—but one is sorry to remark certain of the familiar minor vices. Although hard and fast divisions between thought and feeling have bedeviled modern criticism, Mr Hillyer, if one thinks that way, is a poet of intellect rather than emotion: sentiment, with him, is apt to blur. Teasingly, as in so many instances, the artist's best is what he calls his second-best. Every poet has his ups and downs, and sooner or later his fatal disease, to wit, loss of self-criticism, is followed by the fatty degeneration of his books. Thus far Mr Hillyer has always recovered.

This book is not better than his last—indeed, there was no good reason to suppose it could be. Moreover, poets should not be encouraged, because authors develop an appetite for praise, and are only too easily persuaded of their progress and improvement when common experience proves quite the contrary. Once let a poet convince himself that his art is "a living, growing thing," and

he, too, promptly tries to grow—with the usual consequence that he ends self-conscious and dull. Mr Hillyer has maintained himself: of the nine sonnets in *The Seventh Hill* at least four are as fine as the best of the first volume, *Sonnets and Other Lyrics*, of eleven years ago. The school is that of the wisest—Mr Santayana.

Of the other poems, *Tierra del Fuego* and *For Ever*, the first two in the volume, and the thirteenth (Mr Hillyer has discarded all titles for numbers and made his list of contents of first lines) are the most notable. These three Mr Hillyer has not ever excelled, although the metrical experiment of *Fading Moon* is the most interesting for the artisan. To discard titles was good: one wishes the author might do likewise with certain words and turns of phrase conventional only with poetry. For melody, for verbal felicity, and not infrequently for quick description, there is only praise; here and there, however, are little patches one might fairly call pink.

A cynic has said that no one ever hears himself complimented with sufficient discrimination, but perhaps not the least virtue of this verse is negative: the absence, that is, of qualities which make modern poetry so frequently foolish and offensive—insincerity, strut, and strain.

STEWART MITCHELL

EXTRA GOOD ONES

FOURTEEN GREAT DETECTIVE STORIES. *Edited, with an Introduction, by Vincent Starrett. 16mo. 400 pages. The Modern Library. 95 cents.*

FIRST, Mr Starrett has done a good job. So have the publishers in avoiding the title, "The Fourteen Best . . .", because that leads to irritation. All the stories included are good and half of them certainly rank with another half dozen or so, as the best of the lot. Especially to the editor's credit is his capacity to pick a good story out of a lot of bad ones; the little man with a piece of string who serves as the detective in stories by Baroness Orczy has always bored me; and Mr Starrett has found The Fenchurch Street Mystery which is extraordinarily good and shows the detector who reconstructs cases out of newspaper clippings at his most ingenious. On the other hand, he has put in The Problem of Cell 13 which is only a detective story because a detective is the principal character; it tells how he escaped from a cell on a bet. Davis's famous In the Fog is really a spoof detective story, but is legitimate; and one of the best yarns, The Absent-Minded Coterie, infuriated me because it is too subtle or—as I hope—it is part of a series and the unexplained portion of the mystery is carried on to another story. I may say that the collection begins as all collections should, with a tale by Poe (this time it is The Purloined Letter) proceeds (correctly) to Conan Doyle (The Red-Headed League—a fine story, I confess against my inclination to choose another) and then comes quick to its climax in The Blue Cross, one of the very best of the Father Brown stories.

The requisite nowadays is a new means of detection and a passion for this novelty leads people like R. Austin Freeman (who has an amazing gift in developing his plots) to the dull scientifics of Dr Thorndyke. (See, for example, A Certain Doctor Thorndyke, recently published, in which half the book is an adventure story quite above the average, but totally unnecessary in relation to Dr Thorndyke's dull microscopic investigations of bits of dust.) The supreme merit of Chesterton is that almost all his explanations

are connected with ethics, that is, fundamentally with character. Father Brown is a detective because he is a Catholic priest—and that gives the tales, apart from their intellectual interest in the Chestertonian system, novelty as pure detective stories. Philo Vance (in S. S. Van Dine's series of full length novels) is at pains to assert that he finds the criminal by considering the crime critically as a work of art—but I do not believe him; he is using the old methods of common sense, deduction, a bit of science, and the rest. The excellent Hewitt, first successor to Holmes in point of time, is a good simple detective—he works on clues as a good detective should—at least in stories. Luther Trant uses association tests (which somehow leave me as cold as Craig Kennedy's fantastic inventions—properly omitted from this collection). The blind Carrados uses imagination to reconstruct a scene or, in this case, *The Tragedy at Brookbend Cottage*, to construct one in advance of the crime.

All methods are good if they make good reading. In *The Case of Oscar Brodski* Mr Freeman tells the story of a murder with complete detail and tells how the clues were swept away; in the second part he tells how the clues were reconstructed—and this story is as interesting as most of those which suddenly disclose the unsuspected murderer in the last paragraph. In *The Age of Miracles* a story is again directly told with no specific indication that a crime has been committed; toward the end the detective forces a sort of restitution by threatening a man in obscure terms; and the last line of the story gives the whole thing point by showing that there had been a murder.

This does not mean that a good story is the essential thing and that detection is secondary; it means only that the method does not matter. In *The Age of Miracles*, for example, the moment you know the facts, the whole story shows itself as a piece of detection. The true believer in this type of fiction is rapidly becoming indifferent to his own capacity to guess a criminal's identity. Mystery is part of the fun, but after the first three thousand stories the greater pleasure is in the working out. I have read (and hastily forgotten) any number of detective stories in which I was completely baffled as to the outcome, and completely indifferent because the relation of the story, the characters and the plot, did not hold

attention. And I have spotted a criminal in the third chapter and remained entranced by the skilful complexities of the story.

I do not know whether psychoanalysts have gone to the bottom of the almost universal passion for police romances. Probably it is due to a variety of suppressed desires—to commit murder and to prevent murder, to live dangerously and to love policemen. I find my interest heightened whenever the author plays fair with me, makes himself my adversary, but a respectable one. This gives two conflicts to the story—between the criminal and the detective, between the author and the reader. And a double satisfaction at the end.

GILBERT SELDES

BRIEFER MENTION

MR. HODGE AND MR. HAZARD, by Elinor Wylie (12mo, 256 pages; Knopf: \$2.50). Of Miss Wylie's books this is the most satisfactory. Here is pathos pinioned with a glancing stroke and displayed with the light sad grace of an ironic princess whose insight has been nurtured in studious isolation. Capricious ladies smile with indulgent disdain on the poet's vagaries, the poet whose innocence and whose depth, whose shabbiness and whose pride, make him, in these fragile scenes, so singular, so chastised a figure.

TRACKS IN THE SNOW, by Lord Charnwood (12mo, 284 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$2) is distinguished by clear simple writing; by a murder which is really mysterious; and by the presence of three or four possible criminals, one of whom, at least, is studied as a character. The blemish is in the irruption of an old story from the Antipodes; but it is not a bad old story; and the mechanism of the final pages is excellent.

THE GREENE MURDER CASE, by S. S. Van Dine (12mo, 388 pages; Scribner's: \$2) is easily the best of this author's three. Grudgingly (as a reference in the text shows) Philo Vance has given up some of his insufferable conceits; and in the space left by the omission of his bad English and presumably good Latin, the author has been able to develop his story with completeness. It is the story of a household destroyed—one member after the other. As each one is suspected, each death narrows the field of possibilities; finally two are left and—you do not guess which is which. Actually the story would be more logical with the ending reversed, but the author has been obsessed with the idea of keeping the identity secret as long as possible and has sacrificed the story a little. There is a long literary background for the crime at the end; and two hints are dropped with exquisite precision exactly where no one picks them up. This is the first of the Philo Vance stories which is not based on an actual case—and fiction has bettered fact.

THE BARE HILLS, by Yvor Winters (12mo, 62 pages; Four Seas: \$2). Nature's hieroglyphics of the visibly significant can be man's testament to suffering—to the arrogance, the humility, the pain, the pleasure, the discipline, the undiscipline of existence—and these poems acutely convey understanding, or to be exact, apperception, of the sharpened sensoriness of one who can eat bread "as if it were rock," whose cumulative eloquence, "trapped and morose" at times, recedes in geometric inverse ratio to its imperativeness; who does yet see sacramentally, "a fern ascending," "a last year's leaf turned up in silence," "the streets paved with the moon smooth to the heels." For Mr Winters "the harvest falls . . . with a sound of fire in leaves"; "sunrise is set as if reflected from a violin hung in the trees"; "the hairy cows . . . move here and there with caution."

FUGITIVES: An Anthology of Verse (12mo, 164 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2). Including for the most part more than a single poem by each of the eleven authors represented, this anthology is judiciously persuasive. Throughout the collection, however, one is conscious of a prevailing attitude—of equivalences shall one say—of thought and feeling which make one wish that feeling were an easier thing to exposit and that contemporary vernacular were less hydra-headed, ostrich-natured, insatiate, and in the manner of the Indian *fakir* on the bed of spikes, relentless toward itself.

JEALOUS OF DEAD LEAVES, by Shaemas O'Sheel (12mo, 72 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2). This carefully winnowed selection of the poetry of Mr O'Sheel has a peculiar interest of its own. It is an almost flawless specimen of the type of wistful romantic emotion against which the most original poets of our age are so bitterly reacting. Tender, plaintive, and sincere, one catches in these fitful cadences the charm of something that is passing away; an appeal to a response in us that has grown faint, jaded, weary.

AN ESSAY ON CONVERSATION, by Henry W. Taft (12mo, 75 pages; Macmillan: \$1.50). To the science of this matter Mr Taft has applied the wisdom of Addison, Montaigne, Doctor Johnson, Doctor Mahaffy, Macaulay, Lord Chesterfield, Lamb, Hazlitt, Thoreau, Emerson, and others. He implies that tactful persons are more nearly equipped to prevail in conversation than "a race of contenders" and would welcome, with Doctor Johnson, opportunity for friendly interchange of thought "where suspicion is banished by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to offend, and hears with no other disposition than desire to be pleased." For so kindly a book one craves an invulnerable verbal mechanics unmarred by stock phrases and rhetorical "inaction"; but as trustworthy and conversible readers, we must accord our benefactor appreciation, not mere mechanical appraisal.

FLORENCE, by Camille Maclair, translated from the French by Cicely Binyon (8vo, 221 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$5). The person of culture learns Florence early and is apt to forget that continually there are new persons to begin the process of acquiring culture; and hence the said p. of c. is apt to disdain the guide-books by which he clumb to knowledge. But they are a useful part of the modern equipment and can be inoffensive. Indeed Camille Maclair's is admirably discreet and those mighty names, Savonarola, Brunelleschi, Machiavelli, Giotto, Botticelli, Leonardo, et cetera, are given their correct values in it.

AMERICA, by Hendrik Van Loon (illus., 8vo, 470 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$5). Of Maximilian, Dr Van Loon writes: "He was a kind soul, an amiable prince, and he painted lovely pictures and played quite nicely upon the piano and knew an awful lot about botany. But he didn't have much of a chin—no, he didn't." As is done sometimes in murder trials we should like to "rest our case," to offer nothing in rebuttal, trusting entirely in the good sense of the jury and confident that justice, in the end, will be done to all.

LA COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE, par Constant Mic (8vo, 240 pages; Edition de la Pléiade, Paris: price not given). This is the sort of thing they do so well in France. They have rich libraries stored with the records of a gorgeous past and the leisure and the desire to put order into their records for the pleasure of the amateur—who is pleased in such numbers, apparently, that the loving labour is not ill recompensed. This book is a handsome specimen of its kind, replete with the psychology and manners, intimately detailed, of the art of the strolling players who relate so closely to Molière and Shakespeare and consequently to us. A not ungrateful touch is the dedication to the "*plus grand Comédien de notre temps*, Charles Spencer Chaplin."

THE THEATRE OF NEPTUNE IN NEW FRANCE, by Marc Lescarbot, translated from the French by Harriette Taber Richardson (8vo, 28 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$4). This masque, representing an incident in the early history of European settlement in the New World, was first presented "upon the waves and upon the frozen river banks" at Port Royal in the year 1606. Its verses show a cultured knowledge of the literary usages of the day. With its delightful illustrations and punctilious notes it should prove of particular value to students of the period and to those whose leisure allows them to follow bypaths narrow and select.

CÉZANNE, by Julius Meier-Graefe, with 106 plates in collotype, translated from the German by J. Holroyd-Reece (4to, 66 pages; London, Benn; New York, Scribner's: \$22.50). "The quivering dancing dot in the chaos can be painted. If the attempt fails, one had better not paint at all, for art, today, exists only to collect our conceptions of the world. Courbet may have had such a vision of it in a dream when he thought to have discovered realism; Manet had an inkling of it when he made his demand for *contemporanéité*. Both were too glib, too surprised by their own novelty to penetrate the shell to the kernel; they painted perfect fragments. Cosmos is what matters. If the cosmos is as tattered as ours, art will gather it together in tatters." This, too, is glib. Very smart writing indeed. But does it mean anything? *Surtout*, does it really clear up the mystery of Cézanne to the anxious enquirer who has hitherto been baffled by it? Yet Meier-Graefe has his followers. It is a case, no doubt, of enthusiasm breeding enthusiasm rather than reason breeding reason.

MARC LESCARBOT, Nova Francia, A Description of Acadia, 1606, translated by P. Erondelle, 1609, with an Introduction by H. P. Bigger (8vo, 330 pages; Harpers: \$4). This admirably edited edition of Lescarbot's adventures among the American Indians is entirely justified in carrying upon its cover the great name of Montaigne. Wise and civilized, whimsical and penetrating, Lescarbot's observations upon "our savages," as he affectionately entitles them, are an illuminating proof of the indulgent humanity of the old French culture in its contact with the aboriginals of the New World. One detects nothing brutal, nothing patronizing, in these genial travel-diaries; and the biblical and classical quotations, with which the author liberally garnishes his narrative, fall pat on every occasion.

MUCH LOVED BOOKS, *Best Sellers of the Ages*, by James O'Donnell Bennett (8vo, 460 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3.50) grew out of a series of newspaper articles bearing the title *Best Sellers of the Ages*—a journalistic undertaking of such quality as to amply merit its evolution into a book. The author has retold the significant history of more than fifty classics, spiced with anecdote and flavoured with quotation. Beyond question, "the songs of Homer and the meditations of Thoreau are still good news."

BOOKS AND BIDDERS, by A. S. W. Rosenbach (8vo, 311 pages; Little, Brown: \$5). Love and the prices of love are curiously blended in Dr Rosenbach's book. There is no doubt whatever that he genuinely loves literature though the vague suspicion haunts the impecunious amateur that such an expert could not love it so much if it lacked market value. This is all nonsense, of course, and Dr R.'s ready reply would be that literature worth loving necessarily has all the requisite money-values and so what are you going to do about it? Nothing. Dr R. has us there. At the same time this trafficking in dead souls is disturbing and there is something callous in thus shouting from the roof tops, charnel-house secrets.

THE STORY OF MYTHS, by E. E. Kellett (12mo, 255 pages; Harcourt Brace: \$2.75). Written in an easy gossiping style, interspersed with topical and ludicrous allusions, too closely packed perhaps with diversified matter to convey the finer plausibilities, this little book should have the effect of starting a pleasant Myth-mania in many unsophisticated minds. Its chief interest for others will be in various unexpected items of mythopoetic information; such as that "the sun in Teutonic myth is a girl"; and that "the baker's daughter" of Hamlet's allusion became an owl, because she cried "Hewgh! Hewgh!" when a miserable dole of dough she had offered to our Saviour grew in the divine hands to enormous proportions.

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE OF TODAY, by G. H. Edgell (8vo, 375 pages; Scribner's: \$6). In this timely and comprehensive book on the architecture of this country Mr Edgell has done a notable piece of work. Steering his way with adroit balance between technical professionalism and popular common sense, he has furnished enlightened readers with precisely the bird's-eye view they needed in order to grasp the essentials of the stupendous Renaissance in the midst of which we live. Mr Edgell does not shrink from according to our more daring individualists, such, for example, as Mr Frank Lloyd Wright, recognition due to their unprecedented innovations.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY, *The Clown, The Harlequin, The Pierrot of His Age*, by Haldane Macfall (illus., 8vo, 270 pages; Simon & Schuster: \$6). Those who wish the facts of Beardsley's life may get them here. The parentage, schooling, friendships, hemorrhages, exiles—and even the obscenities that Beardsley repented of on his death-bed—are recounted in the order in which they occurred. There is nothing, however, of the elegance that the unfortunate artist himself would have put into such a work—nothing of mystery, fantasy, or wit. The writing, in fact, lacks style.

BEETHOVEN: *His Spiritual Development*, by J. W. N. Sullivan (8vo, 262 pages; Knopf: \$3.50). How much of a man may be read from his music is an elusive problem, and Mr Sullivan—with the best intentions in the world—has left it very much where he found it. He has stated the boundaries of his purpose elaborately, but the more earnestly he strives for definite conclusions, the more generalized and remote his thinking seems to become. It simmers down to his declaration that "Beethoven's work will live because of the permanent value, to the human race, of the experiences it communicates." So much is incontestable.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, by G. K. Chesterton (12mo, 211 pages; Dodd, Mead: \$2). Mr Chesterton starts with the idea that too much sentimental nonsense has been written about R. L. S., that it encumbers the memory of his famous friend, and that it should be swept away by a dash of common sense. This is almost as much a myth as the stuff he dispels. Gush has a way of dying of its own inconsequence and Mr Chesterton does it too much honour. For the rest, his essay makes agreeable reading—not the most profound item but certainly not the shallowest in the long array of Stevensoniana that encumbers our shelves.

JOHN MACDONALD, *Memoirs of an Eighteenth Century Footman*, edited by Sir E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power, with an introduction by John Beresford (8vo, 256 pages; Harpers: \$4). Success in literature, like success in love, is sometimes mysterious. There must be a guiding principle but not all the rules are known. John Macdonald succeeded in both avocations. He was a simple footman who thought to keep a journal—and kept it exceedingly well. It reads as easily as romance—in fact there is romance in it, for this was a Don Juan among footmen, who troubled the peace of mind of maids and mistresses but who valeted gentlemen perfectly and managed to see a great deal of life in so doing.

JANE WELSH AND JANE CARLYLE, by Elizabeth Drew (12mo, 276 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50). Miss Drew has assembled the conflicting reports and contested theories in relation to Jane and Thomas Carlyle, and her book purports to be a final statement of their celebrated situation. She writes in a manner that should ensure for her a wide reading among the followers of the popular monthlies. To the present reviewer, however, this author lacks the necessary perspicuity to do complete justice to her subject, and we are, in the end, left just about where we have been so often left before.

A HISTORY OF FRENCH LITERATURE, From the Earliest Times to the Present, Revised Edition, by William A. Nitze and E. Preston Dargan (8vo, 770 pages; Holt: \$5). Where these authors have had the pruned criticisms of the past to draw upon they have written most excellently. Their work is, in the best sense, professorial—analytical, balanced, authoritative, interesting. It is, however, we regret to say, in the portion of their book which the present volume was revised to include, that a certain lack of literary selectiveness becomes discernible. Perhaps even for our most enlightened teachers time must pass its well-tested judgements before they can be wholly trusted.

WORDSWORTH IN EARLY AMERICAN CRITICISM, by Annabel Newton (12mo, 193 pages; University of Chicago Press: \$2.50). As a contribution to that peculiar aspect of the history of criticism that might be named aesthetic psychology, this little book offers both significant and entertaining evidence not only as to how slowly and reluctantly the moral sensibility of American taste learned to outgrow its preference for Mrs Sigourney and Mrs Hemans, but as to the obstinate temperamental difficulties that hindered even such daring critics as Emerson and Poe from catching the true Wordsworthian spirit.

THE WORKS OF SCHOPENHAUER, abridged and edited by Will Durant (12mo, 539 pages; Philosophers' Library, Simon & Schuster: \$2.50). Mr Durant in his cheerful introduction to this able selection of the great pessimist's work says that what we like in Schopenhauer is his honesty. But could the philosopher who wrote *On Noise* and *Of Women* be called quite honest? Does not his power lie rather in his passion, crabbed, personal, and uncompromising, presented as it is with such sagacity, with so sober and formidable a logic?

THE WORKS OF PLATO, abridged and edited by Irwin Edman (12mo, 553 pages; Philosophers' Library, Simon & Schuster: \$2.50). This is an excellent abridgement of Plato. Professor Edman's Introduction follows with a most nice and cautious step the middle path between a too brusque and slap-dash popularization and a too sophisticated scholarship. The style of his translation is at once easy and free from flippancy. In his selections the stress is laid rather upon the idea-play of the Platonic Socrates than upon the more abstruse Platonic ideas. Thus the *Apology* and the *Symposium* are included; the *Timaeus* omitted; but the method of choice is well defended in the Introduction.

CHAUCEr, by George H. Cowling (12mo, 223 pages; Dutton: \$2) is the best comment that one could have on Chaucer's poems. Professor Cowling tells us all that is known about the poet's life and gives us a critical history of the texts that make the canon of his poetry; he situates Chaucer amongst the happenings and the ideas of fourteenth-century Europe, and he gives a judicial estimate of his poetry. The book reveals research, but a research that is not obtrusive; it is as well written as it is judicial and informative. What Professor Cowling says is never novel, but it is something that he has proved for you. "He was the first English poet to prize metrical form, the first to display conscious narrative art, and the first to achieve a style. . . . He created the novel in England, as distinguished from the old order of romance." He has shown it is so before he said it. And this, "There can be little doubt that Chaucer's variety, his love of trickery as a motive, his 'tragedies,' his realistic setting, and above all, the excellency of his art of narrative, are due to Italian influence." The chapters in the book are *The Life of Chaucer*, *The Canon and Chronology*, *The Scholar*, *The Poet*, *The Novelist*, *Style and Character*. It is a book that really helps us to understand Chaucer, and to send us back to reading him—even to reading *The House of Fame*, *The Book of the Duchess*, and *The Romaunt of the Rose*.

THE THEATRE

IT must be many months now since I used these pages for my old-fashioned sermon on the virtue of knowing what kind of play you are producing before you are quite finished with the production. The short name for the possession of this virtue is style. By achieving a style, the Theatre Guild, Mr Moeller directing, gave a grand production of *VOLPONE*; by debasing one, the producers of *THE BEGGAR'S OPERA* ruined one of the loveliest memories in years; by being utterly unconscious of the meaning of the term in regard to production, Mae West presented a supremely absurd melodrama called *DIAMOND LIL*, and redeemed it because in herself she has a sense of style on the stage. Mr Harry Wagstaff Gribble need only refer to these pages of many years ago to know that I was not one of those who held back admiration from his *MARCH HARES*; the new production directed by the author retained the name and the description of "a fantastic satire," but on the billboards it was called "that slightly cockeyed comedy" so a confusion of styles was inevitable.

*VOLPONE*¹ is a translation from Stefan Zweig's free rendering of the Jonson comedy. The indirect approach to a masterpiece seems absurd; Jonson can be played directly from his texts—I recall *THE ALCHEMIST* done by the Phoenix Society in London as a particularly attractive play. From the text, however, Jonson remains remote, an amateur's delight for a single performance or two; and in the Zweig version the material becomes much more malleable, the old craft retains her swelling sail, but becomes seaworthy in great oceans. Zweig is always a man of skill and adaptability; in this case he saw great possibilities and at once recognized what he wanted to do with them. Chiefly he wanted to make a sardonic comedy of character in the manner of the improvised comedy of the Italians—and the relations between Jonson and the *commedia dell'arte* were close enough to justify him. The names in *VOLPONE* are not the names of Venetian or Bergamese masks,

¹ Ben Jonson's *Volpone: A loveless Comedy in 3 Acts*, Freely adapted by Stefan Zweig. And Translated from the German by Ruth Langner. With Decorations by Aubrey Beardsley. 16mo. 187 pages. The Viking Press. \$2.

but the characters are essentially the same. Volpone is the most equivocal figure; but Mosca is surely Harlequin-Sganarello and Colomba is Columbina and the old men are versions of Pantalone and so on down to Leone, the captain who is Spavente of Hell Valley over again.

The quick complications of the plot are also in the *commedia* vein; things happen and are explained as swiftly as they are in American comic strips or in Keystone comedies. There remains the difficulty that Volpone himself is complicated. In the old *commedia* he would have been nothing more than a miser gloating over his gold; in this play he is envenomed against the human race. No other character has any complexity—each is reducible to a single passion, demonstrable by a specific gesture. Volpone is a character, a person who thinks not as a Harlequin with the common wisdom of his time, but as an individual. If the play were to be considered pure *commedia dell'arte*, Volpone would throw it slightly out of focus.

This is what made the production difficult and the success so vastly interesting. In two parts it went wrong. One was the obvious case of McKay Morris as the Captain for Mr Morris seemed not to be aware of the Captain's antecedents, and insisted also on having the appearance of emotions where the text gave him none. He should be the braggart in all simplicity—his connexion with the plot as the disinherited son is almost beside the point. He should be vastly exaggerated (Mr Morris was not wrong there) and should never appeal to our emotions (in this Mr Morris failed). The other instance—I am almost surprised, myself, to say it—is Mr Lunt whose Mosca seemed to me altogether to lack lightness, the Harlequin touch, except in a few scenes of physical agility and deftness. It is quite true that in the end Mosca is quite a moral character, flinging away the money which has caused so much evil. Yet his enthusiasm for intrigue, his gratuitous complication of the master's plots, his betrayal of one dirty trick and his defence of another, are all the marks of the wilful servant who started in the Greek comedies and passed through every civilization until he appeared in our own time as Inbad the Porter or as The Wildcat. Mr Lunt seemed to me too sicklied over with the pale cast of thought and although he was clearly creating a character by means of many touches, all harmonious, all in one style, it did not seem to me that the style was entirely appropriate.

Mr Digges as Volpone, Messrs Leigh, Cossart, and Travers as

the birds of prey, Miss Gillmore and Miss Westley as the contrasted women, were all perfectly in the tone of the play; so were the costumes and the sets; so were the movements of the crowds. Like everything in the *commedia*, the text is nearly nothing, for a filling in with jokes and quips—not verbal, but active—with the treasured *lazzi* of the originals, gives sparkle and movement to the play. In the court scene, for instance, there has been the usual amount of relayed shouting. "Order in the Courtroom" began offstage right and carried across the stage to offstage left, growing fainter in the distance. And presently one of the characters tells how he heard the cry of "Rape" and instantly the stage is full of soldiers and court attendants shouting "Rape" with terrific gusto as it echoes down the halls. Scene after scene received this hearty treatment, the type of thing found usually in burlesque and farce. It was tremendously funny and it never got in the way of the other interests of the play. On the whole I think it is the Guild production I have liked best in several seasons.

MARCH HARES is amazingly fresh after seven years. It is all lightness, inconsequence, and frivolity; and once at each of its productions a critic has called it unhealthy and immoral. It is a comedy of exhibitionism and a great many involutions appear, of which Freud is the unconscious father, but so neatly run into the plot and so carefully not tagged with serious names, that you are unaware of implications for their own sake. It is not remarkable that this play, after two failures here, should be successful in London, for it stems from Oscar Wilde. It neither crackles nor sparkles so continuously as Wilde's better comedies, but there is a strong current of fantastic irrelevance, of the kind of humour which used to be called shaggy. It was acted too heartily in spots and too pointedly in others; even so it never failed to be entertaining in its central episodes.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA was too coy for words. Possibly a five-year tour of the American and Canadian provinces would rub the bloom off any production—one feels rather sorry for the players, returning to a second siege of New York. Essentially, I take it, Gay wrote a burlesque of the Continental opera of his time, convinced that a few good old English tunes and a few thieves and rogues would make as good entertainment as Germans and Italians

could offer with Xerxes and Corydons. He was more than right since his work has lasted and theirs has been sliced into *arias* for concerts; but to preserve his rightness and to make it interesting, one needs to produce *THE BEGGAR'S OPERA* in the authentic spirit of the original. This carries much farther than attention to clothes, properties, and pronunciations. *THE BEGGAR'S OPERA* produced as a burlesque of *IL TROVATORE* would still be in keeping with Gay's intentions. To make it pretty, to attempt to win for it those very seductions of grand opera which it burlesques, is unkind—and ineffective.

Unwilling to wait an additional week for the appearance of Miss Mae West, I travelled far to see *DIAMOND LIL*, to a place differently named by every member of my party, but roughly definable as an hour's taxi-ride, at top speed, from the Bossert Hotel in Brooklyn. The theatre there (Teller's Shubert by name) is gorgeous in gilt and plush and the drop curtain has advertisements of such old-fashioned things as stoves and addresses on Broadway—not meaning Manhattan. It seemed to me that ninety per cent of the audience came at the last minute and bought tickets, as one does for the movies. Before this simple audience Miss West unrolled a melodrama made of the most sordid materials: drunkenness, dope, white slavery, murder, and the like. None of these was rebuked, none glorified. In Miss West's works there are not exactly tears for things as they are, but a sort of half-interested constation. Unenergetic as ever, moving sullenly about the stage as if it pained her, forgetting her lines, dropping out of character and into it again as if that didn't matter (and it doesn't) Miss West walked magnificently through the play murmuring acrid nothings. "You can be had," she said, without emphasis to the Salvation Army captain at the end of the first act; "I knew you could be had," she said to the same man as police captain at the final curtain, with as little urgency and no triumph. Against her own grudgingly offered movements she placed hundreds of people in action. The final scenes take place in the back-room of an old saloon with no less than three parties of slummers, dancing waiters in profusion, prostitutes, drunkards, cab-drivers, politicians; everyone sang and danced; and Miss West, reluctant in action as usual, made the one mistake of her career when she sang badly a thin version of Frankie and Johnny. It was horribly, fascinatingly wrong. Experts in Mae West assure me that this play is not as good as *SEX*—as a medium

for Miss West's talents; it is much more closely drawn together than *THE WICKED AGE*, but is not necessarily better on that account, for Miss West is at her best when things drift along with as little plot as possible. But she had a moment which came out of the plot, a touch of dramatic imagination and morbidity—as if Wedekind had collaborated with Sardou. She had killed a woman and as the body rested in a chair, she suddenly loosed the long black hair and flung it over the staring eyes, and as someone came to the door began to comb the dead woman's hair. "What are you doing?" her husband asks. "Something I've never done before."

I am quite prepared to be rapped over the knuckles for saying that a bit of this sort of thing would have helped Miss Le Gallienne's *HEDDA GABLER*. Her own creation of Hedda was a bit synthetic, and I suggest that the next time this play is done, the actress taking the part should make Hedda a totally uninteresting woman, without any passions, with nothing morbid except her lack of vitality, and explain her catastrophic influence on people as one explains the mischief caused by a child kept in on a rainy day. For we have had Hedda over- and under-sexed, had her intellectual, and nerve-racked, and passionate; it's time we had her as a fool. In that case the other characters would all be different—and more interesting. The poet would be robust and Tesman an impassioned scientist heartily bored, when he isn't terribly annoyed, by his cantankerous wife. This would relieve the play of the heavy-handed satire which now makes Tesman a bore (in the manner of *MARCO MILLIONS*—for Ibsen really upset the apple-cart about the American small town fifty years ago) and would give us some reason for fresh interest in Hedda.

It is the misfortune—for actresses—that *HEDDA GABLER* is usually judged by a single brief scene—the burning of the manuscript. I have seen this done violently and quietly and in all degrees between. But as I am unable to believe in the emotional significance of most of the events leading up to it, the scene has never affected me, so I would like to see it done as sheer malice.

In *TAKE THE AIR*, Will Mahoney does some of the most entertaining comic dancing I have ever seen. His technique seems to be based on the "repetition complex" or whatever it's called—and it almost destroyed me with laughter.

GILBERT SELDES

MODERN ART

WHENEVER I think of the flashing, tempestuous, highly-coloured personages of the Middle Ages I fall back, with a certain degree of comfort, in seeking comparisons with those of our own time, on thoughts of "Squire" Robert Chanler and Joseph Stella. Both of these flash and give forth colour on the slightest provocation. Both could easily have held their own in the *moyen âge*; verbally, in the palavers that seemed so much part of the job in those days and fistically, in the crescendi of the arguments; fists being an essential aid to mediaeval thought, or at least to the putting of it over. But both these mediaevalists have found the going rather difficult in New York this winter.

It is very easy to retort that New York is not *moyen âge*. New York could be *moyen âge* if it wished. New York can be anything it chooses. For the present, it simply doesn't choose to be *moyen âge*—which, from the point of view of modern art, is a pity. The money that everybody seems to have, is, on the other hand, quite *moyen âge*. I mean by that that it seems to come mysteriously from the air in the way in which money always came to the mighty in times past. But our mighty do nothing with it. Nobody says, "Here take this purse," as dukes and duchesses always did in Beaumont and Fletcher—or if they do, they invariably say it to the wrong person. We none of us spend amusingly, save, perhaps, this Mr Marland, of Oklahoma, of whom I am always talking—and, of course, for that reason. What we need, among the spenders, is a King Ludwig of Bavaria. A King Ludwig would be particularly the thing for Squire Chanler. Someone to build crazy edifices in outlandish situations, giving the artist carte blanche to paint his least restrained imaginings, scandalizing the straight-laced to death, rejoicing and justifying subsequent generations of the Sitwell family, and putting infinite money into the coffers of custodians and tourist agencies, once our present wave of prosperity shall have ended and we shall have become poor again. . . . I don't think it necessary nor even likely that we shall ever be poor again, but it is one of those contingencies, as the life-insurance agents say, that should always be taken into account. . . . A King Ludwig for

Chanler, but—if I could conjure patrons from up my sleeve—and in reality that's what I'm endeavouring to do at this moment—a Queen Ludwigg for Stella. Perhaps I have not spelled her correctly. I'm weak on German spelling. But at any rate, since religion enters into the question, with Stella, I think it had better be a lady. Ladies like to take their religion nicely, but even more than that, they yearn to see others taking their religions nicely. It is this last trait in the fair sex, Mr Stella, that can be worked.

This quite American artist—but with Italian forbears—has recently been treading the paths that pilgrims have worn to old-world chapels and has returned to us with religious paintings which have been exposed to view edifyingly, if the press is to be believed, but not profitably, if you prefer the report of the Picture-Dealers' Union. In short, the deplorable truth is that, at this writing, not one of these religious paintings has been sold. How is this, you ask? Are we not a religious nation? Do we not love art any more? Of course, we are, and do. How could you even ask such a question? The whole of the matter, I think, is simply this—the right lady hasn't come around. It takes a lady with a certain amount of money (but they all have it, in reality) with a certain amount of piety (less frequently met with, but still encountered occasionally) and an imaginative feeling for the religious and aesthetic necessities of persons quite different in character from herself. (This last provides the rub. Imaginative donors are rare as roc's eggs.) For the odd part is that a pious, refined, and generous lady must be found, who will see the beauty of bestowing several Virgins and a Mater Dei that she will not herself think “convincing” upon a chapel, preferably in the region immediately south of Washington Square, that is frequented by hordes of parishioners who shall be capable of immediately consulting Joseph Stella's Mater Dei upon any question of health, marital fidelity, or daily living that may happen to pop into their heads. For the lady-donor herself the Mater Dei will appear to have a disturbing newness. Not so, to the parishioners in question. Newness is not so frequently encountered *chez eux* but that it remains a virtue. Besides, you can allow a whole lot for the flickering candle-lights. They would do things to Joseph Stella's pure colours that would aid materially, I am convinced, in the cure of rheumatism and other complaints. Some of the grandest and most efficacious altar-pieces in the old world are now so bedimmed by time and so almost undecipherable, that

I have sometimes allowed myself to suspect that in reality it was the glittering frames that had worked the celebrated miracles. But any glory of that kind that the future has in store for the pictures under discussion must be wholly Joseph Stella's; his frames do the work of framing but they do nothing else. I must not, however, give the impression that my interest in the Stella Madonnas is entirely medical. That would be quite wide of the fact. On the contrary, I am almost exclusively concerned, in this matter, in giving certain members of society an art they may comprehend. When I see the struggles of some of the most highly civilized members of the community with such a comparatively simple art as that of Dunoyer de Segonzac, I realize full well that what we still refer to (behind their backs) as the "lower classes" must have pictures built specially for them if they are to get anything out of them at all. At present, about all our "peasants" get, in that line, is the comic supplement to the Sunday newspapers. Joseph Stella's Madonnas are peasant, and unless I am grievously mistaken, will remain so. No amount of patina nor centuries of candle smoke can change them into Fra Angelicos or even Botticellis. They have nothing that speaks to the sensibilities of the educated; but they have nothing, on the other hand, that interferes for an instant with a peasant's dream of heaven. The very lavishness of the adornment, to people who have been forced to lead simple lives, seems heavenly. Stella has surrounded his Virgin in each instance with everything he could think of as being acceptable to Her; apples, flowers, pretty birds, all in the gayest, unblinkingly brightest colours he could get from the shop. They are applied, these colours, with a callousness that I am only too much aware of—being, alas, one of the sensitive ones, myself—but in spite of all that I feel a charm in decorations such as these that are so much on the level—that have been held so firmly down to the level, both of the artist's feeling and his countrymen's capacity to receive, that I refuse to put too much emphasis upon the word "down." On the contrary, I shall look about for the pious lady above referred to, and see what I can do further towards talking her into a state of receptivity. I think, really, she will get great spiritual satisfaction out of the affair, once she lets herself go.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

SACRED Concert, Carnegie Hall, New York—the Detroit Symphony Society, under the direction of Ossip Gabrilowitsch. That is to say, the St Matthew's Passion, by Johann Sebastian Bach. One can hardly complain that a work by Bach is given with omissions, since there are few of us who have ever heard one given otherwise. But we may object when, in the interests of "drama," the literary connotations of this term are taken in preference to the music of Bach itself. Tonal action is surely something richer than its paralleling of certain verbal expositions of torture and distress. There is action in the mere assiduity of re-statement, of fugal interweaving, though such episodes must, from the standpoint of plot and drama, be looked upon as interruptions. But is not the spirit of such compositions as the Bach Passions something other than lame opera? Mr Bodanzky, perhaps through so many long hours in the Metropolitan, seems better minded to make us feel the distinction. He lays emphasis upon a more strictly musical series of events. The plot is looked upon as an *opportunity* for the arias and chorales, whereas Mr Gabrilowitsch tended to treat anything but the strictest march of the story as digression.¹ Similarly, the tenor, Richard Crooks (who served so startlingly in the Choral Symphony under Toscanini) was bidden to append onomatopoetically a range of tears and sorrow to a narrative which seems most moving if the voice is allowed to impress us with the barrenness of the biblical account itself. To that extent, at least, the audience could be expected to participate in the production. Similarly, as in the final chorus and the remarkable accompaniment of the "Oh, Golgotha," everything was suppressed to bring out the simple melodic line of the music, whereas Mr Bodanzky, under like situations in the John, seems to put more stress upon the antiphonal and complementary effects of voice and instrumentation. Still, this is to wrangle and

¹ We may have this much of pedantry to reinforce our position: that the original Passions seem to have been pure narratives—and that the formal contribution of Bach and Handel lies precisely in the added ballast of "contemplation," wherein the dramatic mood is made static and elaborated lyrically, like variations on a theme.

to be embarrassed at wrangling. New York is before all indebted to the Detroit organization for the performance of a major work which we should have lacked otherwise, a performance which profited by much drilling and devotion.

Pierre Monteux, at the closing concert of the Philadelphia Orchestra in New York, repeated the programme which he had given us with the Boston Symphony some years ago: the Schumann Symphony in D-minor and Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*. Was the Schumann, we ventured to speculate, chosen as a companion-piece because of similarities or divergencies? For the two works could now easily be seen to overlap, the symmetry of Schumann tending at keen moments towards a prophetic perversity, a stridency which, growing as it did out of such orthodoxy, was perhaps more violent in its effect (though not *per se*) than anything in the *Sacre* itself. Stravinsky, on the contrary, is found to have lost all his strangeness and gained in solidity. Thus, even those who play with their toes do us services, by banalizing a method until none but the masters of that method are exceptional.¹ The innovations had ceased to protrude.² The music, as it recedes in time, will doubtless share the anthological fate of *Ein Heldenleben* and *Tod und Verklärung*, works whose strangeness belongs to history, and whose mastery to aesthetics. And with its oddities worn away, it contains many passages of simple smoothness, as for instance such pages as the introduction, "designed to suggest the mystery of the physical world in spring," with its anonymous flutter of life, its multitude of individual voices, each existing for itself and yet implicated in the total body. This work, which was once "speaking in tongues," is now dogma.

¹ For the "death" of modernism cannot mean that all modernistic works are automatically scrapped. Indeed, the whole ideology of the death has now become so prevalent that it can be re-examined. Modernism is dead only in the sense that the adventitious joys and the adventitious risks have been extracted from it. Though not in Philadelphia where, we understand, the giving of the *Sacre* occasioned some of that riot among the audience which the music was once thought to contain in itself.

² Except for certain rhythms, as less has been done by the epigons in this difficult field of observation. It was in the matter of these salient rhythms also that the music seemed most to require choreography as mimetic comment (which, indeed, we did sometimes illegitimately get last year in the ballet effects of Goossens' conducting of this work).

The first of the Copland-Sessions Concerts of Contemporary Music, which was heard recently after the great guns of opera and symphony were silenced, provided a neatly balanced programme, deriving as much variety as possible from its single species. Thus, a sonata for violin and piano was followed by pieces for flute, clarinet, and bassoon; and an arrangement for voice and percussion preceded three sonatinas: for 'cello and piano, piano alone, and violin and piano. These changes in timbre could compensate somewhat for the lesser divergencies in idiom. . . . In the Chanler Sonata for Violin and Piano, there was a declamatory quality, particularly in the first movement, though even here it might advantageously have been still more strongly present. The *lento moderato* had—which seems more usual with the slow movements—the greater amount of coercion. But in the close, the *scherzando*, we were left without intrinsic signs. At a time when all music has something of the *scherzo* about it, the *scherzo* itself tends to become too glib, with its liberties readier to hand than its rewards. In the pieces for flute, clarinet, and bassoon, by Walter Piston, there was much to enjoy in the simple collaboration of the instruments, the bassoon now soberly and sluggishly punctuating, and now trying to keep pace with the converse of its nimbler fellows. The Five Phrases from the "Song of Solomon," by Virgil Thomson, were an "orientalizing" recitative, sung to the successive accompaniment of tom-tom, cymbals, and wood-block. The composition, thus, possessed a talking point. The song was unhesitantly solemn, and Mr Copland tapped the wood-block with particularly deep emotionalism. The Chavez numbers were surely the sturdiest on the programme, though the piano sonata seemed so much of a piece that its individual movements suggested slight differentiation among themselves. His sonatinas were perhaps more pliant, if only through being less virtuouse and less ambitious. It is to be hoped that the success of this first concert will suffice to carry the project beyond the two programmes originally scheduled.

KENNETH BURKE

COMMENT

IT is his resolve, Leo Stein tells us, never to review a book unless essentially in sympathy with it and never to proffer his critical verdict without at the last again consulting the book to be sure that what he has written is apt and dependable. Though we are sufficiently like "Prussolini" to feel that we should, possibly, have the same impression of a book after writing about it that we had had of it before, we agree with Mr Stein in choosing, when we can, to analyse what we instinctively like. Volcanics seem pardonable when they are one's own, but in others it is some species of poetics usually which attracts one, and in search of pure art we tend to feel betrayed when experts tell us merely where it is not. There is, to be sure, a kind of destruction which is not destruction, nor as enlarged experience in any sense an impertinence—those little folded and cut, scissors-lace conceits of Hans Andersen: a balloonist, a chimney-sweep, a lover-and-gallows, or inscribed as by the writing-master, a *MARIE* continuous with the geometric garland which surrounds it.

We have been so fortunate—dog being interested in dog—as now and then to happen, in print, upon phases of cordiality. Arthur Davison Ficke as imaginary counsellor to an imaginary poet has offered what it seems to us is sound advice—suggesting as evidence of sincerity, the willingness to work for a time without recognition; the study of great masters of the past, a learning the lesson of their method not merely of their manner, disbelief in the fable of the poet's attic, and ability to earn a living entirely apart from the writing of poetry. A kind of every-author-his-own-Whittington fantasia of the studios seems at times not entirely repellent; but a superiority achieved by ant-like industry need not be even to uncommercial eyes, illiterate or mildewed. Messrs W. and G. Foyle, the London booksellers for instance, are satisfactorily romantic in their conviction that "any book" which has eluded your search hitherto may be speedily obtained." (Their first catalogues were, they say, transcribed by hand and distributed with the request, "Please return when used," and both members of the firm were so young at the time of this first venture that it

seemed to them judicious when possible to reply by post to enquirers since a customer had mistaken one of them for the office-boy.)

Among other persuasions of literature there have been lectures by and articles about AE. "The remarkable thing about AE" Padraic Colum says, "is not the vitality which permits him to get so much done in his day, but the eagerness, the freshness of interest, which seems to be always his . . . as if he had a charm to prevent the world wearying him. Or perhaps it is a technique—a technique which saves his vitality from flagging and goes with his deliberate practice of concentration and meditation."

The cynic's tooth is again evaded with delicacy in a recent discussion of Marc Chagall by Christian Zervos. Susceptible to the subordinated minutiae of such things as the boat, bridge, and metropolitan architecture in the *Self-Portrait*, 1918, we know Chagall to be technical and exact and yet, as Mr Zervos says, "one who lives in a state of enchantment and gracious absorption"; we respond to his "capacity for receiving impressions, his tenderness, something subtle, sensitive, feverish, impatient, emotional, timid and arrogant." "And so one cannot too much encourage artists who strive to bring back unity, who perceive new sources of ecstasy, who all their lives love something not to be found in this world. . . ."

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